MENNONITES IN THE WORLD WAR

OR

NONRESISTANCE UNDER TEST

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MENNONITES IN THE WORLD WAR

OR

Nonresistance Under Test

By J. S. Hartzler

Assisted by a

Committee Appointed by Mennonite General Conference

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God."

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MENNONITE PUBLISHING HOUSE

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1921

PREFACE

As many have undertaken to write the history of the recent World War and the issues involved, it seemed good to some that we also should write upon that phase of it which most vitally affects nonresistant people, especially the Mennonites of America.

Among the first to suggest such a work was J. S. Hartzler, the principal writer of this volume. As one of those who were actively engaged in looking after the welfare of our young men who for conscience' sake could have no part in carnal warfare, he with others felt that there should be a careful writeup of events, a clear statement of issues involved, and a record kept of what our nonresistant people did to meet the problems arising from the war. After one of his trips to the camps he gave expression to his convictions in this matter. The proposed book was thoroughly discussed from every angle, and all who expressed themselves gave voice to the conviction that it should be written.

But who to write the book was the question. Most of those who had given the problems arising from the war the most serious attention were encumbered with other duties and therefore not in position to undertake the work. Brother Hartzler was finally chosen to write the book.

Soon after this, letters came from brethren in

different communities who (without knowing anything about this which we have just mentioned) described the identical book and urged that it be written. Accordingly a committee, including those who had thus written, was formed, and after further consultation it was again decided that Brother Hartzler should be the writer. The committee thus formed was as follows: J. S. Hartzler, N. H. Mack, S. G. Shetler, Vernon Smucker, Daniel Kauffman. The work was prepared as rapidly as circumstances would permit. The manuscripts about completed, we found ourselves near the meeting of another session of General Conference. This body discussed the advisability of publishing such a work at some length. The concensus of opinion expressed was that a work of such general interest should be published by authority of General Conference and an enlarged committee was appointed to take charge of it. Following are the names of those on the committee: S. G. Shetler, J. S. Shoemaker, George R. Brunk, N. H. Mack, Vernon Smucker, J. S. Hartzler, Daniel Kauffman. By action of the committee it was decided that Brother Hartzler should rewrite the book in conformity with the views expressed at General Conference, and with the aid of the committee the work was completed. Thanks are due, also, to a number of other brethren and friends who aided materially in furnishing the necessary data and compiling the work.

This book, having been more than two years in the making, is before you. It is dedicated to the cause of peace and good will, to the cause of truth and righteousness. The imperfections of men are apparent in the makeup of the volume, but we trust

that the strength and importance of the cause may make this a valuable reference book. With the hope that God may use this effort to the strengthening of His cause among men, and with confidence that He will always care for His own, we submit this message for your prayerful consideration.

D. K.

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INTRODUCTION

It has been a great pleasure to me to read the manuscript for the new book, Mennonites in the World War, written and published under the direction of the Mennonite General Conference. The brethren who were made responsible for this work have all had practical experience, have been more or less prominently connected with the leading movements and organizations of the Mennonite Church for a number of years, which, with the deep interest they took in preserving and safeguarding our peace policies, serves to qualify them for the production of this book. In principle the book brings no new story; it merely reiterates the teachings of Christ and His followers down to the present generation. During these years the faith was severely tested and the Gospel of peace was preserved only after many severe struggles and a great cost of human life. The tortures of rack, the flames at the stake, and the jaws of the wild beasts in the arena were all brought to bear on this faith but unable to destroy it. The marvelous heroism of the "Apostle" and "Prisoner of the Lord," facing the darkest world with no weapon other than "The sword of the Spirit;" a Livingstone in benighted Africa; a Paton among the South Sea Islanders; a Menno Simons among a fanatical and unrighteous priesthood; a William Penn in the midst of savage Indians—have been constant sources of inspiration to the unfaltering spirit of the ardent

supporters of the message: "On earth peace, good will toward men."

The opposition of Mennonites to war is not of a sudden growth, but it is an abiding conviction in the Church based on the teachings of our Savior and traces back to some of the persecuted Christians outside of Romanism to the times of Christ and His apostles. The principles of peace and opposition to war have been deeply implanted into the very life-blood of every true Mennonite through four centuries, and to violate this now would rob them of a sacred religious principle, giving them a guilty conscience before God. Their unfriendly attitude toward war is not founded upon disloyalty to government but upon the conviction that the Gospel of Christ is a Gospel of peace and that "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

The Mennonites gratefully recognize the good will of our government in the enactment of such laws as offer continued protection and religious liberty—laws which attracted our forefathers to this country and has been the occasion of constant joy and thanksgiving to Almighty God.

Years have come and gone, and whatever the trials of faith may have been, today we stand on the threshold of a new era. The untried future with all its mysteries and opportunities lies before us. We review our past experiences and try to understand what this has meant to us individually and collectively. Thinking of the experiences as recorded in this book, we marvel at what has been done. We have just begun to realize what can be accomplished by careful, prayerful, united effort.

In connection with this spiritual awakening we

owe a debt of gratitude both to our church leaders who have had the rule over us and to those who have manifested in their lives that composure of soul and that intimate connection with their Lord in the noble defense of the faith. The influence from the lives of our sincere young brethren has been woven by invisible hands into the very texture of our souls and into the life of the Church. We have come to understand and appreciate each other and to "know Him" better by having witnessed His handiwork in these noble lives.

Joy and sadness mingle as voices call and hands beckon us to penetrate spiritual darkness in the nations that lie prostrate before us. We must needs go. We are His witnesses. Around the Prince of Peace we must rally. In pursuit of it we must gather our forces and set our hearts to the "regions beyond" and proclaim the Gospel which "is the power of God to every one that believeth."

I have read the manuscript for this book with profound interest. Tears flowed freely at times, then again my heart throbbed with praise and thankfulness to God. The simple, pathetic way truths and experiences are told adds much to its effectiveness. May God's choicest blessings accompany this message and all who in bold defense of the faith shared to bring a seemingly lost vision of the Prince of Peace anew to a dying world.

Albert J. Steiner.

CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

Beginnings.

Jesus Christ built His Church upon the Rock. Notwithstanding waves of persecution, infidelity, and indifference which have swept over it, it is still there, and we have the assurance that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The Church grew rapidly from the beginning, with Jerusalem as a center around which the believers flocked until persecution began to rage, when "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." With all that the followers of Christ became very numerous in some places and passed through ten general persecutions before the time of Constantine, neither sacred nor profane history shows that they avenged wrongs or tried to protect themselves or their government with carnal weapons. On the contrary they professed to be "strangers and pilgrims," and their lives corresponded with their profession. Matt. 5:21-26, 38-48; Luke 6:27-29; John 18:36 and kindred Scriptures were the basis of one of the tenets of their creed.

Heresies.

A number of things led away from the simple faith. First, heathen customs had crept into the Church already in Paul's time and continued. Sec-

ond, heresies became more numerous. Gnosticism, Montanism, Sabellianism, and Manichaeanism are among the most striking examples. Third, the idea that it required an elevation to the priesthood to rightly interpret the Scriptures led common people away from the Bible instead of to it, and naturally the people became less and less devoted to its teachings. Fourth, the Roman Church became somewhat idolized. Cyprian said, "One visible Church and one only, can be right. In it and not beyond it, is the abode of the Holy Spirit." This held nominal membership in a visible church so high that it became an end in itself rather than a means to an end. These things tended to make the Church more worldly, and at the same time caused the truly devout to lament the conditions and finally to withdraw fellowship from Romanism. They could not fellowship the corruptions that naturally came into the body, and the once persecuted now became the persecutors. Those who dared to stand against those things were at once branded as heretics. This was perfectly natural in the light of Cyprian's statement.

Church and State.

But even a corrupt Christianity has some advantages over a pagan religion. The number of adherents increased until the State courted alliance with the Church. Just before going into battle with Maxentius, also one of the rivals for the Roman throne, Constantine declared himself in favor of Christianity, won a signal victory, and made Christianity the religion of State. That was a sad day for the Church.

Persecutions, hard as they were to bear, were a blessing in keeping out those who were not true. But since Christianity had been made the religion of State, it had also become popular to "belong to Church." Many became Christians in name for personal gain. A form of piety was all that was necessary for office whether in government or in religious work. Church ordinances became a means of salvation in the minds of people — baptism to wash away sin; the communion to eat the literal flesh of Christ and to drink His literal blood as a means of purification, and in itself a great virtue; alms-giving a means of placing accounts on the credit side of the ledger in heaven.

Developments of the Papacy.

Step by step conditions developed which led to the reign of a few in spiritual matters. Then rivalry did not cease until one was considered superior to all others. He was called the father of the Church on earth, the papa or pope. Hereafter no one was expected to find fault with him or his work. When Symmachus was pope, a member of the synod was appointed to try him for some charge brought against him. Symmachus said, "God alone should try the Bishop of Rome."

Persecutions from within

In all ages after that there were those who would not bow to the mandates of the Roman Church but rather suffered terrible persecutions. Faber, in speaking of the Paulicans (so called because they so often quoted from the Apostle Paul) says, "The firmness of their religious adherence to

principle was marked by their frequent and ready submission to martyrdom. Hundreds of them were burned alive upon a huge funeral pile."

John Haynes Holmes, in his book, "New Wars for Old," gives some illustrations of the position of the early Christians He says, "One said, 'It is not lawful to bear arms.' Another, 'Because I am a Christian I have abandoned my profession as a soldier.' A third, 'I am a Christian and therefore I can not fight.' A fourth, 'I can not fight if I die; I am not a soldier of this world but a soldier of God.'" Speaking of the time when the Church was largely won by the Roman Empire, he says, "One of the most surprising results of this conquest of Christianity by the Empire is the practical annihilation of the doctrine of nonresistance, which had played such a conspicuous and heroic part in the early history of the Church."

The same author, speaking of the Catharists or Cathari, says, "It is a matter of record that when the persecutors of Rome fell upon them with fire and sword and rock—pillaged their homes, tortured their old and young, and slaughtered men, women, and children, all alike without compunction—they died for the faith that was within them."

Peter Waldo, the Waldenses and Kindred Sects

Peter Waldo was a rich merchant in the city of Lyons, France, who lived in the twelfth century, became converted and devoted his entire fortune to translating the Scriptures and placing them within the reach of the common people. He went forth to preach the Word with the power of the Holy Ghost. Chamber's Encyclopaedia contains the following re-

garding Waldo: "He was less the founder of a sect than a representative and leader of a wide-spread struggle against the corruptions of the clergy." In speaking of the "struggle" it must not be understood that this was with carnal weapons, for this would be contrary to the claims made in his preaching. He held that the nonresistant principles of the New Testament had their roots back in the decalogue. His followers were hunted like wild beasts of the forest and hundreds of them sealed their faith with their life blood, but they would in no wise use physical force in self-defense. Chamber, in speaking of the Waldenses, says, "They are shown to be identical with the followers of Waldo, but they must not be confounded with the Albigenses who were persecuted at the same period. The protest of the Waldenses against the Church of Rome only related to practical questions, that of the Albigenses related to matters of doctrine." Both these bodies were nonresistant.

Alphonsus, King of Aragon who made a decree against what he called heretical sects—a decree of death—further says, "If from this day on any one shall receive said Waldenses....or other heretics of whatsoever confession, into their house, or hear their pernicious preaching in any place or give them food, or dare show them any other favor, be it known to the same that he has incurred the disfavor of God and of us, that he is punishable for the crime of "leze-majesty," and that his goods shall be confiscated without appeal." Regardless of this the doctrine spread and believers and teachers found refuge and food. This was very trying to the authorities who in some cases offered pardon to the

heretics if they would only tell who gave them shelter, but the language of one seemed to be the thought of all. A woman was on trial for her life. Her persecutors said: "We want to know whom you have taught." She simply said, "Let me in peace with this, but interrogate me concerning my faith of which I will gladly tell you." In some burroughs half of the people were either murdered or imprisoned for their faith, but their only defense was the Gospel of Jesus Christ which they gave with earnestness to those who persecuted them.

Reformers and Nonresistance

Martin Luther's position on nonresistance was a very peculiar one. He held that the Bible taught nonresistance, and in ordinary life should be practiced; but that citizens of a country are obliged to fight at times. In other words, nonresistance is our duty as Christians, but as citizens we can not live up to the teachings of the Bible.

Ulrich Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, in his "Admonitions to Those at Schwyz," says, "But if we look at it from a Christian viewpoint, it is by no means right for us to go to war. According to Christ's teachings we should pray for those who speak evil of us, and when we have been smitten on one cheek, turn the other also; for thus we shall be sons of our heavenly Father" (Vol. II, Page 294). At the same time he held that Church and State should be one, but he found this impossible if he was going to carry out his own writings, and hence from this standpoint admitted that war was necessary at times. He was required to take part in a battle between the Catholic cantons of Lucerne and

the canton of Zurich. The latter army was defeated and Zwingli was among the slain.

Both Calvin and Erasmus, both men of learning and prominent in the reformation in France and Holland as well as beyond the borders of their own country, taught nonresistance. The former said, "Trust in the power of man is to be unconditionally renounced; if there is need, God will work a miracle to save His Church." But then, as now, nonresistance was not a popular doctrine, and Calvin finally yielded the point, but Erasmus continued a firm advocate of that doctrine to the end of his life. His "Plea for Reason, Religion, and Humanity Against War," was scholarly, clear, and convincing.

Menno Simons

What Luther was to Germany, or Calvin to Switzerland, Menno Simons was to the Netherlands —and more. Menno's heart was stirred because of the many believers who were as "sheep having no shepherd," their leaders having been imprisoned or killed. For these he suffered agonies of body and mind. One quotation from his writings shows much regarding the disposition of the man. "This is my only joy and the desire of my heart, that I may extend the borders of the kingdom of God, make known the truth, reprove sin, teach righteousness, feed the hungry souls with the Word of the Lord, lead the stray sheep into the right path, and win many souls for the Lord through His Spirit, power and grace."

Menno and Nonresistance

On the question of nonresistance, Menno said, "O beloved reader, our weapons are not swords and

spears, but patience, silence and hope, and the Word of God. With these we must maintain our cause and defend it. Paul said, 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal; but mighty through God.' With these we intend and desire to resist the kingdom of the devil; and not with swords, spears, cannon, and coats of mail.....Behold, reader, such rebellion we seek to cause, but never a rebellion of calamity....True Christians know no vengeance, no matter how they are maltreated."

His Work and Death

Menno was a great organizer. With him it was not a question of name but of faith and belief. In his interviews he found Waldenses, Anabaptists, Hussites, etc., who agreed with him on the teachings of the Scriptures and he received them into the body as members of the Church. In this his work reached far beyond the borders of his own country. He was hunted like a wild beast. Criminals were promised pardon for any crime whatsoever, if they arrested or even killed him. His sacrificing disposition was not appreciated regardless of his desire to help mankind and glorify God. Thirty years of active service, under the greatest persecution, with a reward offered for his head, under privations and exposure, all for Christ's sake, was too much for his mortal body, and in his sixty-sixth year he passed to his reward.

Menno's Followers

These principles implanted into the lives of his followers made them as despised as he himself was. In times of war they would have no part in the conflict. During the religious wars of Europe both

Protestants and Catholics suspected them of treachery. Both persecuted them because of this, but that did not prevent them from following the beautiful example of their Master in forgiving, and praying for their persecutors. They fled to other countries for refuge (Matt. 10:23) only to be driven from there later.

From Germany to Russia

At the invitation to Catharine II, Czarina of Russia, a great many Mennonites moved from Germany to her country with the promise of freedom of worship, freedom from military service, freedom of education, and exemption from certain taxes on conditions that they settle in a part of the country which required a great deal of work to bring under cultivation. This began in 1788 and continued at intervals, so that (according to J. J. Wiens, an evangelist from that country) there were at the beginning of the late war, eight settlements in Russia and three in Siberia, several of them quite large. Considering the fact that there was a large exodus of Mennonites from Russia to America, Germany must have lost thousands of these people to Russia.

From Europe to America

For various reasons there were periods of unrest in Germany. During one of these, thirteen Mennonite families left there and settled in what is now Germantown, Pa., in 1683. During the next thirteen years quite a number more came. William Penn offered the Mennonites of Europe freedom of worship and exemption from military service if they would move to Pennsylvania. The news spread rapidly and between 1710 and 1735 possibly five

hundred families left Europe, most of them from Germany and Switzerland, and settled in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania. Still later the Napoleonic idea of conscription aroused the nonresistant people again, and while there was no immediate danger, many people felt that this was their time to leave and turned their minds toward America. Between 1800 and 1850 a large number left Europe and settled in different parts of the United States.

Militarism and Emigration

Military pressure was not directly responsible for all the emigration, but in many cases the cause can easily be traced to it indirectly. These emigrants were among the best tillers of the soil, and were a class of people which the country could ill afford to lose. Helping the needy, honest work, fair dealing, and living quietly were all traits of the Mennonites—traits which make for good citizenship notwithstanding the fact that they would not fight. The efforts to strengthen the military laws of Europe took many of these people away and thus only weakened the country. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

CHAPTER II

MENNONITES AND OTHER WARS

Growth of Militarism in Europe

The barbarous practices of war had been in vogue in Europe as far back as one can trace, regardless of the advancement made along the lines of education and science. As a country excelled in one thing, its rival must excel in some other as a means of protection. Fear and jealousy were general. More and more military laws were being passed and it was becoming almost impossible for nonresistants to get exemption. Practically all the countries had some form of military training. In course of time Germany surpassed all the others in this. The Mennonites of that country accepted the uniform and drill under protest, but in course of time protests grew less and these things were not considered so objectionable from the standpoint of nonresistance. The glitter of the uniform, the glare of the gun, and the thrill of the music helped to quiet the conscience, so that as the years rolled by many young men were glad when they were old enough to begin the course of training.

Effect of Military Training

Having once taken the training there was little use to plead conscientious objections, and as a rule the Mennonites accepted some form of quartermas-

ter service or Red Cross work. With the attractions held up before them in song and sermon, the glory of the empire and the duty of loyalty were made to stand out very prominently. With these conditions, and the idea of divine right of kings, it is easy to see how the doctrine of nonresistance became a secondary matter, especially when accompanied with the idea that if war was not right the responsibility rested with the officials who were responsible for the war and compelled the individual to serve. However, in some parts of the German empire the C. O.'s received more consideration.

Russia Rescinding her Promise

The privileges accorded to the Mennonites who went from Germany to Russia caused many of the Russians to become jealous. Complaints were brought to the government regarding such discrimination, and in time it withdrew these privileges, one of which, as will be remembered, was exemption from military service. At once the Mennonites began to look for new homes. They sent committees to different parts of the world to find favorable countries and conditions. This resulted in a large number going to America. The Czar regretted losing so many of his most prosperous subjects, and on hearing that many more were going to leave, he sent one of his best diplomats among them with a promise of certain exemptions. After some negotiations the following was granted: "The Mennonites who shall be called out for military service shall be assigned to duty only at other places than at the front, as in hospitals, in military works and similar establishments, and shall be exempt from

bearing arms. This provision shall not include such Mennonites as shall unite with the Church after the new military law shall have come into force, or such as shall come into the Russian Empire from any foreign country."

Many of the Mennonites accepted this and remained in the country, and in case of war they were allowed to take forestry instead of service at the front. They planted trees and cut out underbrush and dead timber. They were under the directions of a man who had military training but who at that time was a civilian. This did not prove very satisfactory. It gave no protection to those who became members of the Church after the law went into effect. Parents saw that their sons were destined to accept combatant service or suffer persecution at the hands of government. Also, that if they remained their posterity would soon lose the principle of nonresistance entirely. This brought on the second wave of emigration to America.

European Trend and Nonresistance

With such strong counter-currents against them, not only in Russia but in Holland, Germany, Switzerland and France, the Mennonites of Europe either emigrated or largely lost their nonresistance. Taking any kind of service a few decades ago meant noncombatant service for their children and combatant service for their grandchildren. It meant compromise on a Gospel principle, and while that may be a seeming advantage for the time being, it invariably means disadvantage in time to come. True nonresistance is not a matter of taste, ease, or

trial, but of obedience to the teachings of Christ and His apostles on this subject.

Nonresistance Affects Actions

Nonresistance is inseparably connected with fair dealing because the party knows that he can not defend himself, and he must be careful so that there will be no occasion to resist. That was William Penn's way of dealing with the Indians, and the very small amount of blood that was shed in the early settlements of Pennsylvania compared with marauding and murders committed in other colonies tells its own story. Incidents could be given where the nonresistant attitude of a few faithful people saved whole settlements from these ravages.

Ancient and Modern Councils of Defense

The following shows that in Revolutionary times these same classes of people were required to suffer for their faith,—and compared with conditions in some localities during the great World War it is an evidence that the improvement has been comparatively small regardless of our boasted growth in civilization:

"AT A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION OF THE COUNTY OF LANCASTER,

at Lancaster, Penna., on the 29th day of May, 1775. Edwin Shippen, Esq., Chairman.

"The Committee having received information that divers persons, whose religious tenets forbid their forming themselves into Military Associations, have been maltreated and threatened by some violent and ill-disposed people in the County of Lancaster, notwithstanding their willingness to contribute cheerfully to the common cause otherwise than by taking up arms.

"The Committee, duly considering the same, do most heartily recommend to the good inhabitants of the County,

that they use every possible means to discourage and prevent such licentious proceedings and assiduously cultivate that harmony and union so absolutely necessary in the present crisis in public affairs. At the same time they consider it to be their indispensable duty to intimate to the public their entire disapprobation of any abusive, opprobrious or insulting expressions that may be made use of by any person whatsoever against such of the respectable inhabitants who may think proper to associate for the defense and support of their inestimable rights and privileges.

"The Committee will find means to bring such impudent persons to a proper sense of their misconduct. Yet they ardently wish and hope that no further violence, threats or animosities may appear, but that every member of the Community will readily use his utmost endeavors to promote peace, good order and unanimity among the inhabitants of this respectable county."

LANCASTER. Printed by Francis Bailey, King Street, 1775.

The above is a verbatim copy of the English part of a handbill which is now on exhibition in East Wing of Independence Hall, Philadelphia. The German translation is printed on the same handbill.

Some of the Councils of Defense serving during the late war and winking at mobs and mob violence might have learned a lesson from their great-grandfathers that would have been worthy of their study.

Mennonites and Tories

At the time of the Revolution there was a class of people living in the various colonies which sympathized with the British, called "Tories." They naturally opposed the war. Others, among them Amish and Mennonites, were also opposed to it, but were not at all in sympathy with the actions of the Tories. Many of the colonists could not understand how any one could be opposed to what they were doing and not be in sympathy with the enemy.

The Tories felt sure that these nonresistants were helping the colonists, and that their opposition to the war was simply a means of hiding their true position. This meant persecution from both sides, as is shown in the report of the Committee of Inspection and Observation, just given.

Some Trials

The following from Hartzler and Kauffman's "Mennonite Church History" shows some of the trials which came upon this people:

"During the war many of the able-bodied Amish brethren of Berks county (Pa.), were drafted into service. Refusing to serve, they were imprisoned at Reading. So many were thrown into prison that the women were compelled to work in the fields to support their families. According to tradition those who were imprisoned for refusing to do military service were sentenced to be shot, and the day was set for their execution. A meeting was held in the Reading prison to administer the Lord's supper to the condemned brethren. But the execution was never carried into effect. Through the leading of a kind Providence, friends interfered (particularly Henry Hertzel, Pastor of the Reformed Church) who appealed to the authorities in behalf of those who had fled from Europe to escape military service and who could not be expected to do what their conscience forbade them to do in their former country. The appeal was heard and the peace-loving prisoners were set free."

Exemptions: Letter of Thanks

As early as 1775 the Pennsylvania Assembly passed a law exempting the Mennonites and Quakers from military service under certain circumstances. The Mennonites wrote a letter of thanks to the Assembly and had a number of the bishops to sign it. The following are extracts from it:

"To the Honorable Assembly.....In the first place we acknowledge us indebted to the most high God, who created heaven and earth, the only good Being for all His

A ſhort and ſincere DECLARATION,

To our *Honorable Aſſembly*, and all others in high or low Station of *Adminiſtration*, and to all Friends and Inhabitants of this Country, to whoſe Sight this may come, be they ENGLISH or GERMANS.

IN the firſt Place we acknowledge us indebted to the moſt high GOD, who created Heaven and Earth, the only good Being, to thank him for all his great Goodneſs and manifold Mercies and Love through our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who is come to ſave the Souls of Men, having all Power in Heaven and on Earth.

Further we find ourſelves indebted to be thankfull to our late worthy Aſſembly, for their giving ſo good an Advice in theſe troubleſome Times to all Ranks of People in *Penſylvania*, particularly in allowing thoſe, who, by the Doctrine of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, are perſuaded in their Conſciences to love their Enemies, and not to reſiſt Evil, to enjoy the Liberty of their Conſcience, for which, as alſo for all the good Things we enjoyed under their Care, we heartily thank that worthy Body of Aſſembly, and all high and low in Office, who have adviſed to ſuch a peacefull Meaſure, hoping and confiding that they, and all others entruſted with Power in this hitherto bleſſed Province, may be moved by the ſame Spirit of Grace, which animated the firſt Founder of this Province, our late worthy Proprietor *William Penn*, to grant Liberty of Conſcience to all its Inhabitants, that they may in the great and memorable Day of Judgment be put on the right Hand of the juſt Judge, who judgeth without Reſpect of Perſon, and hear of him theſe bleſſed Words. *Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, &c. What ye have done unto one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done unto me*, among which Number (*i. e. the leaſt of Chriſt's Brethren*) we by his Grace hope to be ranked; and every Lenity and Favour ſhewn to ſuch tender conſcienced, although weak Followers of this our bleſſed Saviour, will not be forgotten by him in that great Day.

The Advice to thoſe who do not [illegible] Freedom of Conſcience to take up Arms, that they ought to be helpfull to thoſe who are in Need and diſtreſſed Circumſtances, we receive with Chearfulneſs towards all Men of what Station they may be——it being our Principle to feed the Hungry and give the Thirſty Drink;——we have dedicated ourſelves to ſerve all Men in every Thing that can be helpful to the Preſervation of Men's Lives; but we find no Freedom in giving, or doing, or aſſiſting in any Thing by which Men's Lives are deſtroyed or hurt.——We beg the Patience of all thoſe who believe we err in this Point.

We are always ready, according to CHRIST's Command to *Peter*, to pay the Tribute, that we may offend no Man, and ſo we are willing to pay Taxes, *and to render unto Caeſar thoſe Things that are Caeſar's, and to God thoſe Things that are God's*, although we think ourſelves very weak to give GOD his due Honour, he being a Spirit and Life, and we only Duſt and Aſhes.

We are alſo willing to be ſubject to the higher Powers, and to give in the manner *Paul* directs us;——*for he beareth the Sword not in vain, for he is the Miniſter of God, a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him that doeth Evil.*

This Teſtimony we lay down before our worthy Aſſembly, and all other Perſons in Government, letting them know, that we are thankfull as above-mentioned, and that we are not at Liberty in Conſcience to take up Arms to conquer our Enemies, but rather to pray to GOD, who has Power in Heaven and on Earth, for *US* and *THEM*.

We alſo crave the Patience of all the Inhabitants of this Country,——what they think to ſee clearer in the Doctrine of the bleſſed JESUS CHRIST, we will leave to them and GOD, finding ourſelves very poor; for Faith is to proceed out of the Word of GOD, which is Life and Spirit, and a Power of GOD, and our Conſcience is to be inſtructed by the ſame, therefore we beg for Patience.

Our ſmall Gift, which we have given, we gave to thoſe who have Power over us, that we may not offend them, as CHRIST taught us by the Tribute Penny.

We heartily pray that GOD would govern all Hearts of our Rulers, be they high or low, to meditate thoſe good Things which will pertain to *OUR* and *THEIR* Happineſs.

The above Declaration, ſigned by a Number of Elders and Teachers of the Society of Menoniſts, and ſome of the German Baptiſts, preſented to the Honorable Houſe of Aſſembly on the 7th Day of November, 1775, was moſt graciouſly received.

great goodness and manifold mercies and love through our Savior Jesus Christ. .....

* * * *

"Further, we find ourselves indebted to be thankful to our late worthy Assembly for their giving so good an advice in these troublesome times to all ranks of people in Pennsylvania, particularly in allowing those who, by the doctrine of our Savior Jesus Christ are persuaded in their conscience to love their enemies and not to resist evil to enjoy the liberty of their conscience.....The advice to those who do not find freedom of conscience to take up arms, that they ought to be helpful to those who are in need and distressed circumstances, we receive with cheerfulness towards all men of what station they may be—it being our principle to feed the hungry and give the thirsty drink;—we have dedicated ourselves to serve all men in everything that can be helpful to the preservation of men's lives, but we find no freedom in giving or doing, or assisting in any thing by which men's lives are destroyed or hurt.—We beg the patience of all those who believe we err in this point."

Records are still extant, giving the names with their respective amounts paid in money fines to be freed from military service on the above basis.

The war spirit ran high. Mob violence was not uncommon even in communities where the practices of the Church should have been well known. Government protests did little good as the parties who carried them on did them in the name of loyalty, not realizing that they were encouraging anarchy instead of good citizenship.

Fines, War taxes, Oath of Allegiance

There were some Mennonites who objected to paying fines, war taxes, and practically all of them objected to taking the new oath of allegiance. They objected to the last one, not because they were disloyal but because they objected to the oath under any circumstances. Finally an agreement was reached between them and government which was

fairly satisfactory to both, but many people could not (or at least would not) understand why any concession should be made because of what to them seemed like a mere whim.

Finances and Mennonites

While government was in need of good meats for the army, many of these prosperous farmers had fat cattle and were offered very high prices for them but were not willing to accept continental money because it had depreciated so much and no one knew how soon it might be absolutely worthless. Not any one of these things was responsible for the feelings against the Mennonites, but all of them together. Mobs took away horses and cattle with seemingly no intent of ever returning them, and in many cases never did. Another condition which meant loss and suffering was, that some of the battles were fought in Mennonite communities. Smith's "The Mennonites of America" says, "The little stone church at Germantown which had been built just a few years before occupied the very center of the battle-field in the battle of Germantown. The winter quarters at Valley Forge, made famous because of the intense hardships endured by the American troops, was in a Mennonite community. Some Mennonites were compelled to do hauling for the army during that time. The adage that 'trials never come single handed' seemed to be verified among the Mennonites in Southeastern Pennsylvania, but as is always the case, those who bore them in the right way and with the right spirit were made the better for them. They drove the victims closer to Him who bears our griefs and carries our sor-

rows, and who promised, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' "

Emigration to Canada

A large majority of the Mennonites and Amish in the colonies were in sympathy with the ends sought by this country in the war, but not with the means used to attain them. However, there were those who questioned; First, the right to take away British territory even if England did the wrong thing in oppressing the colonists; and, Second, the advantages of any other form of government over that of a kingdom. Many of those who held to the latter idea and had prospered under King George decided that they would not forsake him at that time, even if they could not fight for him; hence they moved to Canada, where they might still live under his reign.

Lesser Wars of America

The war of 1812, sometimes called the Second War for Independence, the war of 1848, known as the Mexican War, and the war of 1898, known as the Spanish-American War, were all fought by volunteers so that there were no serious trials for those who could not take part in them.

The Civil War

For many years the slavery question in some form was discussed in every congress, and many people believed that the matter would some time lead to war. That time came when Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States, in the fall of 1860. He took the oath of office on the fourth of March, following, but before that time

seven of the southern states had called conventions and seceded from the union. Others followed after that date. April 12, 1861, Fort Sumpter was taken and the war begun.

Pre-War Military Laws

Before the Civil War, in some of the southern states, especially in Virginia, the military laws registered all able-bodied young men as belonging to the militia and required them to drill at certain times of the year or pay a fine for each absence. This seemed very easy and the Mennonites paid their fines without complaint; but when the Confederate government called for all the militia to come to the front and take up arms, it included Mennonites as well as others. A few went, but a far greater number went into hiding in the mountains and forests, and some remained at home and decided to simply await the results. Some of those who remained on the farm were taken into the ranks under protest, and it was understood between them that none of them would do any fighting. Although they were soon in battle, they remained true to their pledge. The officers in command threatened them with court-martial and death, but the threat was never carried out.

Christian Good

Among those who passed through some of these trials was Christian Good, later a faithful minister of the Gospel and bishop in the Mennonite Church, but now gone to his reward. He had promised his widowed mother that he would never fire a gun at any one. In the first battle he was discovered and reported to the higher officer and charged with

disobedience to orders. He was sent back with a court-martial and death threat hanging over him if the act was repeated. Battles followed in rapid succession but he would not shoot. Others seeing his courage also withheld fire. He was again brought before the officers with the charge of not firing his gun when commanded to do so. He told the officers that his gun would never be fired at his fellowmen, even if his position cost him his own life; that his widowed mother expected him to be true to his promise. He was later exempted on the payment of five hundred dollars. Quite a number of others had similar experiences. The Church paid these exemptions, but Brother Good worked two years on the farm to pay his part back.

The Second Call for Men

In the spring of 1862 the call came for every able-bodied man betwen the ages of eighteen and forty-five to take up arms. Again a number went into hiding. Some seventy of them, Mennonites and Dunkards, made an effort to escape to the northern states, but were captured and finally landed in the dreaded Libby Prison. Two of them escaped and reported the matter to the home Church. That was a time of prayer and supplication. Through some of the officers of the Confederate government who knew something about the Mennonites and their religious principles, a law was passed which gave them exemption. L. J. Heatwole says, "This bill provided that all people professing the peace doctrine as a part of their religion....residing within the Confederate States would be exempt from military duty on conditions that each male member of

such religious body who was subject to bear arms, should pay into the treasury the sum of five hundred dollars." This was paid, "and all the brethren liberated from their confinement." In 1864 the word came that the Confederate government had repealed her exemption laws, and that all able-bodied men between the ages of seventeen and sixty should at once report for service. Many went into hiding again and some made their way to the northern states.

The Shenandoah Valley; Sheridan's Raid

In none of the other Southern States did so many Mennonites live as in Virginia, and by far the greater number of them lived in the Shenandoah Valley. The soil is fertile and many of the farmers were quite prosperous. Both armies looked toward this valley for part of their supplies and in order that the South could not get any more from here the Federals decided to destroy all the food in sight in the valley. Another quotation from Bro. Heatwole express it very graphically: "Then to cap the climax, there came the never-to-be-forgotten Sheridan's Raid....From the evening of October 6th, to the morning of the 8th nearly all the barns and mills....were set on fire in that part of Rockingham county where the Mennonites were located."

Lincoln's Call for Men

The next day after the fall of Fort Sumpter, President Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand men to serve three months. Many of the people in the North expected that the war would be over in a month or two. Instead of that it lasted four years. So long as he simply called for volunteers

the nonresistant people kept quiet and there was no trouble; but drafts were frequently made, calling for a certain number of men from each state. These were apportioned out to counties and townships. For a certain amount of money a whole township could be bought off. This was frequently done, and in this the Mennonites did their full share. Substitutes could often be gotten. Some men paid a thousand dollars to have some one else to take their place. People who had conscientious scruples against war and could satisfy the recruiting officer that they were members in good standing in a nonresistant organization and lived as well as believed the doctrine could be exempt by the payment of a fine of from two to six hundred dollars each, but that only freed them until the next draft when they were liable to be drafted again.

Testing the Draftee

One illustration will show some of the methods used by the examining boards in testing the sincerity of those who claimed a right to exemption: A young man came to such an office with a view of proving his rights to such exemption. When he came up to the desk and stated what he wanted he was told that the officer who had that part to look after was out, but that he would be back soon, and pointing to a desk his informant said, "When you see a man come in and sit down at that desk yonder, then go and tell him what you want." The young man sat down on a long seat provided for those who were compelled to wait. Soon another man came in and went up to a desk, but was told that he too should be seated. He sat down near

the young man and the following conversation took place:

Young man.—"Well, are you here about the draft too?"

Farmer.—"Yes, and I can hardly go on account of conditions at home, but I suppose when they get a person's name on the list there is no such thing as getting excused. He simply **must** go."

Y. M.—"I'm expecting to get off."

F.—"You are? Please tell me how you are going to do it. Possibly I can get off the same way."

Y. M.—"I am conscientious."

F.—"What do you mean by that? Who ever heard of such a thing?"

Y. M.—"Well, I believe it is wrong to fight. All war is wrong."

F.—"Well, how peculiar. Then, too, I have crops out and no one to take care of them."

Y. M.—"Can't you get off on that?"

F.—No, I tried, but it seems to do no good. Then what makes it harder for me to go, I have a neighbor who is very angry with me about a line fence, and I wanted to reason with him about it, but he began to curse me and call me all kinds of names. I was sorry and angry at the same time. What would you do if a man would talk that way to you? He is just as mean as he can be."

Y. M.—(Much interested, and forgetting himself) "Ha, I'd slap him too quick."

The farmer (?) lifted his coat and said, "Young man, you see that star? Your conscientiousness is not very deep. Come with me; you can fight, all right. The young man had to go.

Then, as in the late war, there were "slackers" who tried to hide under the cloak of religion, but many, like this man, were caught at it and made to do military service. The imposters usually do not gain what they hope to, but they surely make the road harder for the genuine.

The Poor Draftee's Fine

After the young men had met the examining board and proven to them that they were sincere there was still another problem for them to face. Many of them were poor and could not pay the fine. But the Church stood together, and in all such cases furnished the necessary amount for their brethren. They sought to follow the teachings of Holy Writ, "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it."

Contrasted Effects of Exemption

These trials brought the Church very close together. Old and young were knit together as one man. The young appreciated the help of the older and the older appreciated the attitude of the young. Trials from without can not greatly harm if there is the right spirit within. In some communities there was much ill feeling because of these exemptions. There were those who did not want to go to war, and who even believed that war was wrong, but they were not members of any Church which held nonresistance as a tenet of their creed. They felt that it was unjust to grant such privileges to some and not to others. Mobs were not an uncommon thing, and in a few localities there was some blood shed. Nonresistance costs; sometimes the price is exorbitant, but, "There is no man that

hath left houses....for my sake and the Gospel's but shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses....with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

CHAPTER III

THE WORLD WAR

The Seeming Cause

"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." A dozen policemen meet a mob and a battle follows. Two of the policemen are killed. Several arrests are made, the newspapers give a thrilling account of the affair, the criminals are tried and executed, another account is given in the newspapers and the matter is soon forgotten. No one thinks of starting a war on account of the riot. But not so, when on June 28, 1914, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir apparent to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife were murdered while driving through the streets of Sarayevo, the capital of Bosnia. The deed was committed by a Serbian youth who rushed up to the automobile in which the royal pair were riding and fired the two shots, both of which proved fatal.

Underlying Causes

Such deeds are always to be deplored. They are never justifiable, but the slaying of one man and one woman could not for one moment be considered sufficient cause for a declaration of war, had there not been other and more deeply rooted causes. Yet the war had been in progress for some time before its real causes were fully understood.

War was fast becoming unpopular—too much so to suit the war-lords of Europe. Jealousy was encouraged. "National honor" was disgraced and must be avenged, and just one month later (July 28, 1914) Austro-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Alliances had been formed between nations so that rivals were on opposite sides. Some countries remained neutral for a time but were finally drawn into the conflict.

Jealousy was not alone responsible. Greed also had a large part in bringing on the conflict. Germany had a decided lead in the manufacture of certain articles which were used the world over, and her favorite mark was, "Made in Germany." England also had the lead in some articles. The same might be said of some other countries. Nations were jealous of each other's commercial aggrandizement as well as of their man power. Secret recipes, geographical advantages, and a number of other things tended to fan into a flame the smoking embers. Germany saw an opportunity to humiliate Russia during the Russo-Japanese war, and Russia never forgot that. A little fanning on the part of the war-lords soon had all Europe ablaze. Thus one nation after another became involved until twenty-three nations of the world had either declared war or announced that a state of war existed between them and some other country.

Germany had a superior army, England must have a superior navy. France had her possessions in Africa, Russia must get a part of China, especially Manchuria, and thus it goes on almost indefinitely. The real cause for the war was in these things, much more than in the murder of a man and his

wife by a young anarchist. In addition it should be remembered that constant military training and study in the intrigues and strategies of war create a desire to try the practicability of such knowledge. The thought of superiority creates a desire to show it to others. The study of the methods of warfare are no exception to this rule.

The United States Drawn in

For a time the United States was not involved, but she was too influential to be left in quietude. Complaints came from both sides of the conflict asking President Wilson to use his "good offices" to get the other side to cease its injustice. There was a cry for humane (?) warfare, but almost with the same breath came Germany's "Schrecklichkeit," which implied that she expected to terrify the enemy. She committed insults at sea against other nations without considering whether they were neutral or foe. Many people became jealous of America's national honor, and frequently in the halls of congress, in the pulpits, and in common conversation came cries for war and revenge. On the other hand, there were a great many people who were seriously opposed to this country allowing itself to be drawn into the struggle. In 1916, the Presidential election came on, and one of the favorite expressions of the campaign was, "Vote for Wilson; he kept us out of war." Many ascribe his re-election to that claim.

War Declared—Preparation

This government, and especially the President, was blamed by both parties for secretly favoring the other side. This was not only an unpleasant

situation, but in time was bound to bring on complications. It will always remain a question as to what part politics and covetousness had in the matter of drawing America into the war. On April 6, 1917, the President declared that a state of war existed between the United States and Germany.

From that moment this government took active measures to supply both men and money. The war department and the general public felt that the Mennonites and other nonresistant bodies were under obligations to furnish their full share of both while such bodies felt that a nonresistant church could not consistently furnish either.

Position of the Church

Here was a new problem. The Church had been vitally and prayerfully concerned for the brethren in Canada, whose country had already been in the war more than two and a half years. She could not forfeit her position, nor did she waver. But to make immediate, wise, and practical applications of the principles of nonresistance to the rulings of congress and the war department which came in such rapid succession required a careful study of the subject. She sought to go just as far as she could in complying with the demands of government without violating a Gospel principle. With the best of care she realized that there were trials ahead.

Nonresistants' Position—True and False

Numerous efforts were made by newspapers and public speakers to define the position of the nonresistants, but in most cases they utterly failed because they wanted to place it on the basis of, "Pass-

ive resistance," "Noncoercion," "Cowardice," "Pro-Germanism," etc. The Church would have spurned either of these. Since her organization she has based her position entirely upon the Word of God, and not on any psychological proposition. "Thus saith the Lord," was her basis. She takes it that Christ meant what He said when He commanded us as His followers to love our enemies, to bless them which curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us (Matt. 5:44); that "All they that take the sword shall perish with (not by) the sword" (Matt. 26:52); that in John 18:36 He laid down a rule which all Christian people should obey; that Paul's teaching regarding revenge (Rom. 12: 17-21), going to law (I Cor. 6:1-8), and "The weapons of our warfare" (II Cor. 10:4) were for all people and for all time; and that no argument, however plausible, could ever form a substitute for the plain teaching of God's Word.

Most Mennonites hold that it is inconsistent for Christians to support war measures; that there is really no such thing as "noncombatant" service in aid of war; but that the man who made the gun and the man who pulled the trigger, or the man who drove the team and the man who loaded the cannon, all of them having in mind the overcoming of the enemy by means of violence, share in the responsibility before God.

Position Towards Government

This position does not imply rebellion to government. On the contrary, the Church believes that we should obey magistrates, pray for our rulers and

never speak evil of them, to "give honor to whom honor is due." Her teaching on nonresistance has always emphasized the duty of submission to the governments which provide us shelter, holding the single reservation that we should always remember that God's law is first and should be obeyed first, and that whenever these two laws oppose each other, "We ought to obey God rather than men."

The Load of Militarism

Conquering nations and conquerors do not long survive the era of their conquest. Babylon, Persia, Greece, Parthia, Rome, and Germany; Alexander, Hannibal, Napoleon, and Wilhelm are monuments of this truth—a collateral proof of the doctrine of nonresistance, and of the truth of the statement that, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Another Reason for Opposing War

But even those who will not accept the Bible teaching on this point have ample reason for opposing war. Think of the war just past. It lasted four years, three months and thirteen days; it cost the combined nations the enormous sum of two hundred billion dollars; it swept millions of people into eternity; it has left millions more cripples for life; it has left some once powerful and wealthy countries all but bankrupt, and all of those involved, decidedly poorer; and now calls for reconstruction work requiring the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars and many years of time. Besides this, thousands of people have died of starvation brought on by the war, and will require the cooperation of Christendom if thousands more do not

die from the same cause. War has been variously defined by General Sherman and others, but language fails one to define this war.

Orchard and Holmes on War

Last, but not least, notice some of the spiritual effects. E. W. Orchard, in his book, "The Outlook for Religion," presents the thought that less than a decade before the war a general idea prevailed "that progress was inevitable to humanity; an irresistible and quite mechanical power was working in the world which was forcing men upward, whether they would or not....We were progressing, the dark ages were over,....a path of steady moral advance lay before us. And now? Well, one is not sure. We are once more back to barbarity. The war has developed a ferocity and inhumanity which would have been thought impossible a few years ago. We have had to consider the spectacle of the most educated, advanced nation in the world perpetrating the most frightful horrors, crashing through an innocent country with awful brutalities, and this justified by her statesmen on the plea of military necessity."

John Haynes Holmes, in his book, "New Wars for Old," says: "See for example the experience of Dr. Frederick Lynch, as narrated in his little book, 'Through Europe on the Eve of the War.' One day he tells us, he saw merchants, clerks, farmers, peasants, husbands, fathers, and brothers in France and Germany, going quietly about their business. On the next day had come the declaration of war, and instantly these men were transformed into beasts." The author then goes on to say what these same

people did after war had been declared, but it is too horrifying to be recorded in a work like this. He further states: "And all this before fighting had begun, or a single drop of blood had been shed.... Talk about war purifying, ennobling, strengthening men! Talk about war instilling patience, sacrifice, heroism in the human heart! War is the corrupter of virtue, the despoiler of purity, the murderer of courage, honor, and chivalry."

Smoking and Profanity

Thousands upon thousands of soldiers at the end of the war are accustomed to using profane language who were never known to utter an oath before. This is shown by a military man who investigated the cause. From a very large number of answers there were several causes suggested, but nearly all of them admitted that profanity had greatly increased in the camps. Possibly an equal number have learned to smoke who were clean men before the war broke out. The tobacco trust put out the idea that the people in America should soothe the boys in the trenches and show that they were being remembered by sending them cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, pipes, etc., and a great many Christian people fell into the trap, and helped the trust to turn clean men into inveterate smokers. Surely there will be a day of reckoning.

Immorality

This is another menace, shockingly apparent in many places. For illustration, let us quote from a government document, "A Message from the Government to the Churches of the United States." Among other things it says, "The war made it nec-

essary for the nation to face frankly and courageously the menace of venereal disease....Drastic measures must be taken to prevent during this period (demobilization) those conditions in civil life which made these diseases the GREATEST CAUSE FOR DEBILITY IN THE ARMY." Two things are certain; First, it must be true, or the government would not have put out the statement; Second, it must have been alarmingly general, or the government would not have gone to the expense and labor of sending out pamphlets asking ministers to preach sermons on the care of soldiers after their return.

"Trench Salvation"

The profanity and immorality already noticed are an evidence of the wide-spread disregard for God and His Word. The "trench salvation" often preached from pulpit and press and camp encouraged this trend. According to this unscriptural doctrine the giving up of one's life in the cause of humanity is an act so noble that God will extend to such an one His salvation independent of the kind of life that such an individual may have lived—this by men who were professedly set for the defence of the Gospel, and in the face of such plain declarations as, "No man cometh unto the Father except by me," "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," and "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Thus was the doctrine of salvation only by grace through faith, as well as the life of individuals, corrupted through the exigencies of war.

At its best, war is cruel and inhuman, and is

constantly becoming more so as the weapons are becoming more deadly and the whole is done with more precision. At one time it might justly have been called war, but today with the modern equipment, and the definite calculations it should no more be called war, but scientific butchery.

CHAPTER IV

THE ISSUES INVOLVED

Nonresistance the Only Issue

National honor, safety for democracy, and a few things of lesser moment were usually given as the issues at stake in this war, and it should be clearly understood that the nonresistant people were not unmindful of these issues, but there was another issue which they were made to face, and which vitally concerned them just at this time. Government was making demands without regard to class or religion. Nonresistant people wanted to comply with these requirements just as far as they could, but they were nonresistant. They held that the Bible taught them this. They must obey God at all hazards. This brought on an issue between them and Government.

It should also be clearly understood that the only issue that was between the Mennonites and Government as to the war had its root in the one word, nonresistance. That was the issue in the home community and in the camp. The Church aimed to maintain this time-honored, Gospel-founded principle. It was deeply planted into the old and young. People who did not hold to that doctrine could not understand this attitude, and believed that these nonresistants were slackers, cowards, pro-German, or to say the least, were not properly taught.

The slogan of many in the home community and in the camp was, "Break his will," little realizing that when one was tortured so that he would yield to what in his mind was opposed to a vital principle, that the injury was permanent. Many a young man will be worth less to himself, to his country, and to the Church, both mentally and physically because he was compelled to pass through such dire experiences that he finally yielded.

It was not a question of the Church giving up her young men, much as she loved them—no, not even if she knew that she would never see them again—if she could be conscious that she was giving them by divine approval. But she could not believe that God would have her give them to take human life, either directly or indirectly, under any circumstances. She felt that war was wrong in principle and contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. With her it was absolutely, "God first." The main issue with the Church was not boys, not money, not sacrifice, but obedience to God.

Noncombatant Service Defined

Evidently Government considered that there was quite a difference between combatant and noncombatant service, but the Church considered that the principle involved was the same. No doubt Government supposed that most of the religious objectors would consent to noncombatant service, and that at best the political objector would have to be dealt with individually. March 20, 1918, nearly one year after this country had entered the war, President Wilson officially defined noncombatant service. The text of his definition is as follows:

"I herey declare the following military service to be noncombatant service:

a. Service in the medical corps wherever performed. This includes service in the sanitary detachment attached to combatant units at the front; service in the divisional sanitary trains composed of ambulance companies and field hospital companies, on the line of communication, at the base in France, and with the troops in the hospitals in the United States; also with the service of supply and repair in the Medical Department.

"b. Any service in the Quartermaster Corps, in the United States, may be treated as noncombatant. Also in the rear of zone operations, service in the following: Stevadore companies, labor companies, remount depots, veterinary hospitals, supply depots, bakery companies, the subsistence service, the clothing renovating service, the shoe repair service, the transportation repair service, and motor truck companies.

"c. Any engineering service in the United States may be treated as noncombatant service. Also in the rear of zone operations, service as follows: Railroad building, operation, and repair; road building and repair; construction of rear-line fortifications, auxiliary defense, etc., construction of docks, wharfs, storehouses, and of such cantonments as may be built by the Corps of Engineers; topographical work; camouflage; map reproduction; supply depot service; repair service, hydraulic service and forestry service."

Attitude toward Noncombatant Service

It was very clear, even before noncombatant service was defined, that it could not be generally accepted. While it would not be carrying a gun, it would be directly connected with and under the military department, and that had for its purpose the taking of human life and the destruction of property and therefore could not be consistently accepted by nonresistants. Again, a careful scrutiny of much of this work suggests service back from the line of danger. This was spurned by many of the nonresistants since it would suggest that they accepted it because they were afraid of danger, and

that was not true. With them it was not danger, or even life, but principle.

Human Reconstruction

When it was found that this line of service did not meet the issue the War Department offered work in the reconstruction hospitals of the medical corps. Evidently this plan was expected to be satisfactory. The text reads:

> "It is found that there are certain men, evidently sincere in their objections to accepting any existing form of noncombatant service, would be willing to accept work in the aid of men who themselves are not to be returned to military service. Men assigned to such work should be granted a certificate limiting their service to this particular service of the medical corps."

This had many commendable points. It was not fitting men for war; it was helping humanity and especially those in need, and it gave excellent opportunity to do religious work. All these our brethren would have been glad to do, but from a nonresistant viewpoint there were too many objectionable features. It required the wearing of the military uniform, was directly under the military establishment, and the work must be accepted voluntarily. To willingly take up any activity so vitally a part of the war was simply to endorse the whole military affair—not by the service rendered, but by willingly becoming a part of the military establishment.

Misrepresented Motives

Some have made capital of the position of the nonresistants, charging that they would not work in the camps because they were lazy, stupid, dull, bovine, or because of a number of other reasons not very complimentary; that they would not buy lib-

erty bonds nor war saving stamps, not donate to the Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., etc., because they refused to part with their money. This is so far from the truth that it would be useless to try to refute it. Witnesses to the contrary can be produced by the hundreds. The issue was not money, not work, not mental incapacity, but the unscripturalness of war.

A few did not take this position. A small per cent considered it a duty to buy bonds and donate to Government. Some of the young men thought that they owed it to their government and to their fellowmen to take some part, even though they could not kill. They applied for noncombatant service on arrival at camp.

There were members who did not live up to the standard of nonresistance upheld by the Church. Here and there were those who thought it their duty to support such war measures as the purchase of liberty bonds, war stamps, etc., some of the draftees took noncombatant service willingly.

On the other hand there were those who put a more rigid construction upon the doctrine of nonresistance than the body of the Church was willing to do, even questioning the right of nonresistant people to register, and in camp absolutely refusing to do anything, even to keep their own quarters clean or to prepare their own food.

Application of the Principle

Some of the brotherhood made stringent applications of the nonresistant doctrine, refusing to sell horses for war purposes or to sell their produce to parties who were known to buy expressly for the

war. They refused to in any way support war measures except in the payment of taxes, etc. Some of the young men in the camps refused to do anything, even to keep their own quarters clean or prepare their own food. (The latter were principally from one of the smaller branches of the Mennonite Church.)

All along the line between these two extremes the greater body of the Church was to be found. Some with very little persuasion were ready to donate to war charities or purchase interest-bearing war papers; others yielded only at the threat of violence, while the great majority stood for the principle of doing nothing which would have for its prime purpose the helping along of the war and suffered rather than yield to what they believed to be wrong. All believed in the main issue—nonresistance—but in minor details they did not all make the same application of that issue to the conditions at hand.

More will be given concerning the attitude of the brotherhood with its results in later chapters of this book.

CHAPTER V

IMPORTANT MEETINGS AND THEIR RESULTS

Meeting at Kitchener

Since Canada was in the war for some time before the United States was, it fell to our Canadian brethren to bear the burden of the conflict the longest. Meetings were called for prayer and consecration. One not soon to be forgotten was called at Kitchener, Ont., for prayer to know what to do. While on the way to the church a letter was received from Government which granted some concessions and the meeting was changed to a praise service. The brotherhood in the United States prayed much in behalf of our brethren in Canada, at the same time praying earnestly that the awful carnage in the East might be made to cease. Another subject of earnest prayer was that this country may not be drawn into the war. We were vitally concerned from the beginning, but doubly so after the President had declared that a state of war existed between this country and Germany.

From the beginning of the war, district conferences nearly all gave some expression on the question of nonresistance and militarism, reaffirming their position and some of them sending letters to the President setting forth the tenets of the Church

on these points of doctrine, but naturally the brotherhood looked to the General Conference for a statement.

General Conference of 1915

The Mennonite General Conference met near Archbold, Ohio, August 18-20, 1915. One of the questions which came before that body was, "Will this Conference state the position which the Mennonite Church holds with reference to carnal warfare?" The following answer was adopted:

"We believe that in the light of the life and teaching of Christ and the apostles, no Christian should engage in carnal warfare under any circumstances nor for any cause. Matt. 26:51, 52; John 18:36; Rom. 12:17-21; II Cor. 10:4. Our testimony should be for peace and our life should correspond with our testimony. II Tim. 2:24. This was the position of the Church in Reformation times as seen in Article XIV of our Confession of Faith adopted in 1632; in the Civil War (1861-65); and at other times when the trial of our faith meant persecution and death.

"When our government becomes involved in war we should pray for our rulers (I Tim. 2:1, 2); have a meek, quiet and submissive attitude toward our government (Rom. 13:7); relieving suffering whenever and wherever opportunity affords (Gal. 6:10); but under no circumstances should we enlist as soldiers and fight, choosing rather to suffer affliction and persecution than to inflict violence upon others.

"Brethren drafted for military service should state their position on nonresistance meekly but unhesitatingly, get relieved if that is possible, but if forced by violence into the army, should suffer themselves to be imprisoned or court-martialed rather than do anything which could in any way result in the loss of life at their hands. As a Church we should disown all members who bear arms as soldiers as that term is commonly understood, but at the same time we should stand by all of our brethren in trouble (Gal. 6:2, 10) and lend assistance to all brethren who suffer because of conscription laws. Our position should be plain to our governments and our prayers should ascend for peace.

Letter to President Wilson and Premier Borden

A letter was drawn up to send to President Wilson, and one to be sent to the Governor General of Canada. These letters were the same except as the circumstances required a change in the wording suitable to the conditions. The one to President Wilson is given here and from it the other one can easily be imagined.

"To the President of the United States:

"Inasmuch as these are days of stress and trial owing to the conditions of war existing among the leading nations of the world and the threatening conditions which seem to imperil the peace and safety of still other nations, and since the existing conditions involve the spiritual and moral life as well as the material welfare of the citizens of these nations, and especially those whose religious convictions are opposed to the use of carnal weapons, and engaging in carnal warfare, and who hold that the teachings and example of Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace should be followed in loving one's enemies and doing good to all men, in returning good for evil and suffering wrong rather than doing wrong, which principles and practices are dear to many Christian people, and especially to the Mennonite Church,

"Therefore, we the Mennonite General Conference, representing congregations in the United States, Canada, and India, assembled at Archbold, Ohio, August 18-20, 1915, reaffirm our position on carnal warfare, and believe it to be the Christian duty of our people to refrain from taking up arms.

"We hereby express our appreciation of the religious privileges hitherto enjoyed by our people in the United States during the previous occasions of war. We desire to commend the President in his efforts to secure and maintain peaceable relations with Europe and Mexico.

"We also desire to express the loyalty of our people residing in the United States in the support of the nation in every Christian duty in the practice of peaceable vocations, respecting authority and praying for divine guidance of those who rule over them, praying also that God may preserve the nation from war and continue her beneficence to her people."

It will not be practical, for want of space, to give all the decisions of the district conferences on

nonresistance and war. One will be given which is quite representative of a number of others:

The Ohio Conference

The Ohio District Conference held near Lima, Ohio, May 23 and 24, 1917, discussed the question: "Since the conscription bill has been passed, what advice has this conference to give to the young men of the Church?" After some discussion the following was passed:

"Whereas, our nation has become involved in the present conflict of nations which necessarily adds materially to the already great responsibility of our chief magistrate, the President, and,

"Whereas, some of the basic principles of the Mennonite Church are vitally affected on points related to nonresistance as set forth in the Confession of Faith (For text, see 'Mennonites on Military Service' later in this chapter.) adopted at Dortrecht, Holland, in 1632, and later ratified in France, and ever since existing in our creed, and,

"Whereas, our forefathers suffered persecution in Europe because of these principles, and came to this country, leaving home and native land in order to obtain the blessing of liberty of conscience which had been promised them here, We, the Ohio Mennonite Church Conference in session at the Salem Church near Lima, Ohio, May 23, 24, 1917, resolved to submit the following to our brethren on the conscription bill:

"1. We ask all our brethren subject to the draft to register as provided for in the conscription bill and proclaimed by the President.

"2. That the above mentioned brethren procure from the bishops and ministers a certificate of membership as provided by this conference to present when necessary to the proper authorities.

"3. That they inform themselves upon the leading principles relating to the existing Mennonite creed that forbids war and to be able to give a good reason for the hope that is within them: 'Love your enemies' (Matt. 5:44). 'Do good to them that hate you,' (Luke 6:27); 'Pray for them that despitefully use you,' (Luke 6:28); 'If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight,' (John 18:36); 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God' (II Cor. 10:4).

"4. That they answer all questions fairly and honestly, and manifest a sincere, submissive, law-abiding disposition as is becoming to a quiet, peaceable faithful follower of Christ.

"5. That they respect our national emblem in accordance with our faith and practice, and that they avoid any display which might be interpreted as favoring militarism.

"6. That they bear in mind that they are subject to the higher powers and to obey magistrates and uncomplainingly submit themselves to every good work for the Lord's sake so long as it is not in violation to the fundamental teachings of Christ as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

"7. To show their appreciation for the degree of immunity which we have enjoyed hitherto and for the promise of future exemption, that our opposition to war is not founded upon disloyalty to our government, but upon the conviction that the Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of peace, and ever pray for our rulers that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. I Tim. 2:1, 2."

Meeting at Clinton Frame Church

Conscription had become a law, registration day was past, each registrant had been given a number, and the order in which they were to appear for examination had been determined. Church leaders were intensely interested in doing all that they possibly could for the young brethren. Late Saturday night, July 21, 1917, the executive committee of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference decided to hold a meeting at the Clinton Frame Church, near Goshen, Indiana, to which all the brethren in the draft and their ministers should be invited. The time was short and conditions were very uncertain, so it was decided that it should be as soon as all could be informed and those farthest away could get to the place. It was decided that if all acted at once the meeting could be held Tuesday afternoon at one o'clock. Word was sent all

over the conference district that night. Other branches of the Mennonites were also informed.

At the time appointed the ministry gathered in the basement for consultation and prayer. Complete harmony prevailed on the point in question although there were six branches of Mennonites present. The brotherhood had gathered in the room above and were also engaged in prayer and supplication. At two o'clock the ministry also resorted to this room and to their surprise found it crowded to the doors with men.

After another season of prayer the draft laws were explained and a number of questions were asked and answered as best any one in the audience knew. Our brethren in the draft were the most vitally affected, and it was thought that they should have an opportunity to express themselves as to their attitude and requests. A number responded, and the general thought was, come what will, they wanted to be true to God and the Church, and asked for the prayers of the brotherhood, especially in their trying hours. It was a meeting long to be remembered, and one that showed how closely we were knit together when trials were in sight, also that the whole Church was ready to suffer with the young brethren.

General Conference of 1917

As the time approached for the next meeting of the Mennonite General Conference, the executive committee of that body saw the importance of having the position of the Church on militarism set forth in a well prepared statement, and appointed a committee giving them the privilege of calling in as

many more as they desired. They wrestled with the proposition for several days, and on the afternoon of the first day of Conference presented the following which was unanimously adopted:

MENNONITES ON MILITARY SERVICE

A Statement of Our Position on Military Service as Adopted by The Mennonite General Conference, August 29, 1917

Inasmuch as present war conditions call for an official utterance from our Church, we, the bishops, ministers, deacons and delegates of the Mennonite Church in General Conference assembled at the Yellow Creek Church, near Goshen, Indiana, Aug. 29, 1917, representing sixteen conferences in the United States, Canada, and India, desire to present the following as an expression on the doctrine of nonresistance as applied to present conditions brought on by the World War now raging.

Our Position Defined

As followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, we interpret His command, "Resist not evil," by His other teachings on this subject; viz., "Love your enemies." "Do good to them that hate you." "Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The Bible also teaches us not to avenge ourselves (Rom. 12: 17–21), that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (II Cor. 10:4), and that "the servant of the Lord must not strive" (II Tim. 2:24). Believing that the children of God should imbibe and practice these teachings, we hold that Christian people should have no part in carnal warfare of any kind or for any cause. Our attitude on the question of military service is correctly stated in that clause of the Selective Draft Law enacted May 18, 1917, which provides for exemption for members of every church "whose existing creed or principles forbid its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein." We deeply regret, however, that this exemption is practically nullified (save in the matter of bearing arms) in the further provision

empowering the government to impress nonresistant people into noncombatant service.

In our Confession of Faith, adopted at Dortrecht, Holland, in 1632, the position of our church is defined as follows:

> "Regarding revenge, whereby we resist our enemies by the sword, we believe and confess, that the Lord Jesus has forbidden His disciples and followers all revenge and resistance, and has thereby commanded them not to 'return evil for evil, nor railing for railing;' but to 'put up the sword into the sheath,' or, as the prophets foretold, 'beat them into plowshares.' Matt. 5:39, 44; Rom. 12:14; I Pet. 3:9; Micah 4:3.
>
> "From this we see, that, according to the example, life, and doctrine of Christ, we are not to do wrong, or cause offense or vexation to any one; but to seek the welfare and salvation of all men; also, if necessity should require it, to flee, for the Lord's sake, from one city to another, and suffer the 'spoiling of our goods,' rather than give offense to any one; and if we are struck on our 'right cheek, rather to turn the other also' than to revenge ourselves or return the blow. Matt. 5: 39, 10:23; Rom. 12:19.
>
> "And that we are, besides this, also to pray for our enemies, comfort and feed them, when they are hungry and thirsty, and thus by well doing convince them and overcome the evil with good. Rom. 12:20, 21.
>
> "Finally, that we are to do good in all respects, 'commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God,' and according to the law of Christ, do nothing to others that we would not wish them to do unto us.—II Cor. 4:2; Matt. 7:12; Luke 6:31."—Article 14, Page 25.

This position has been uniformly held by our forefathers from Reformation times and their loyalty and devotion to their faith is attested by their suffering, even to the extent of martyrdom and banishment by those governments enjoining military service upon their citizens, and for which cause they gratefully accepted the hospitality and the guarantee of religious liberty of this land, historical records bearing ample witness to these facts.

In relation to governments we believe that every child of God, besides being a citizen of the Heavenly Kingdom (John 18:36; Phil. 3:20), should also be in subjection to civil governments (Rom. 13:1-5; Tit. 3:1; I Pet. 2:13-17). Even laws which may seem unwise and unjust should be

submitted to uncomplainingly and no thought should be entertained of doing anything but comply with all that they ask of us—unless they prescribe conditions contrary to the Gospel; in which case we should meekly but faithfully stand true to the principles of the Gospel, even if the consequences entail suffering. This position has been exemplified by the apostles (Acts 5:29) and our early church fathers.

Past Favors Acknowledged

It is with grateful hearts that we recount the favors and considerations accorded our people in the past. In the days of William Penn our fathers accepted his invitation to immigrate to this land where they might enjoy the freedom of conscience in religion and exemption from military service. These benefits were later confirmed to them by the Constitution of the United States and by State Constitutions. We rejoice that freedom of conscience is thus recognized by the laws of our land. We appreciate the exemption accorded our brethren, both in the North and in the South, during the Civil War, when once their position with reference to war became fully known. We still have among us brethren who suffered for conscience' sake during that period, but recall with much gratitude the freedom from military service which that exemption secured for them.

We are grateful for the exemption clause for nonresistant people in the new Selective Draft Law, and hereby express the hope that when the powers that be fully understand our position with reference to military service, this clause referring to noncombatant service may be accordingly modified.

Our Standard

We acknowledge with deep humiliation that not all of our people have lived in full conformity with the Gospel standard or consistent with our profession of a holy life. Some, contrary to the teachings of the Church, have been entangled in politics, in commercialism, in pleasure-seeking, and in other forms of worldliness; but it should be borne in mind that such conduct has been without regard to the express wish and teaching of the Church. The Mennonite Church having continually stood for the surrendered life, a consistent separation from the world, and an attitude of peace toward all men, we call upon our people to bear in mind our obligations (Eph. 4:1) that in all places they may be known by the Scriptural designation—"A peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The Present Issue

Recognizing with gratefulness the consideration given

our religious convictions, as previously stated, we take this opportunity of giving expression of our attitude concerning the issue as it now confronts us. As a Christian people we have always endeavored to support the government under which we lived in every capacity consistent with the teaching of the Gospel as we understand it, and will continue to do so; but according to this teaching we cannot participate in war in any form; that is, to aid or abet war, whether in a combatant or non-combatant capacity. We are conscious of what this attitude, under existing circumstances, may mean. No one who really understands our position will accuse us of either disloyalty or cowardice; for our record has proven our submissiveness to the powers that be, and to maintain our position under present conditions requires greater courage than to accept non-combatant service. But believing as we do, that any form of service under the military arm of the government means responsibility, either directly or indirectly, for the taking of human life and other destructive acts of war, we cannot consistently do otherwise than hold aloof from every form of military service. Our people have at all times refrained from voluntary enlistment for service in any form under previous military laws, and for us now to accept service under the military arm of the government, would be equivalent to a denial of the faith and principles which we have held as vital to our spiritual well-being and eternal salvation.

We appeal to the President of the United States and all others in authority to bear with us in this attitude and not to construe our position as a lack of appreciation for past favors or as an act of disloyalty; also to grant unto us full liberty of conscience and the free exercise of our faith.

Recommendations

1. **To the Brotherhood.**—We recommend that in humility we seek at the throne of grace the blessings which others have sought to secure through the power of the sword. That we continue our prayers in behalf of the rulers of our land and all others in authority, continue to pray for the peace of nations; that we maintain a calmness of mind and heart that naturally accompanies a trust in God; that we refrain from uncharitable criticism in any form, and avoid heated controversy with those who do not agree with us on points of doctrine, missing no opportunity of complying with the Scriptural injunction of returning good for evil.

2. **To Our Brethren Liable for Military Service.**—We recommend that they comply with every requirement of the government, availing themselves of every opportunity

to present their claims for exemption, exercising care that they do not commit any acts that could be rightfully interpreted as desertion or treason—and at the time when they receive the summons to enter the military service, they present themselves to the authorities and meekly inform them that under no circumstances can they consent to service, either combatant or non-combatant, under the military arm of the government, citing them to the fact that they are members of a church whose creed and principles forbid them to have part in war in any form, and that their consciences coincide with this position; submitting to any penalty the government may see fit to inflict, trusting the Lord for guidance and protection.

3. **To Our Conferences and Congregations.**—We recommend that they make every provision for the wellbeing of our brethren who may be called upon to suffer on account of their faith as a result of this trying situation. While we expect an attitude of submission and loyalty on the part of our members, we should not deal harshly, but charitably and with consideration, with our brethren who may be put to the test in these days of trial.

With a fervent prayer to Almighty God that He may bless and so direct the rulers of our land that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in the full exercise of our religious convictions; that we, as His children, may be faithful to and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; that God in His wise providence may overrule all to the glory of His name and the strengthening of His cause among men, we humbly subscribe our names to these declarations and pledge our powers in devotion to the principles herein set forth.

The conference decided to send a committee of three brethren to Washington, D. C., to discuss the situation with the authorities there, and carry to them the document which had just been passed, and later to present their findings to the Church. Aaron Loucks, S. G. Shetler and D. D. Miller were chosen for this important work.

It had been suggested that those in the draft should be given an opportunity to express themselves to Conference. Immediately after the noon intermission of the second day the moderator asked all the brethren in the draft age to discuss the mat-

ter among themselves and decide whether they wanted to have any statement made to Conference in their behalf, and if so, to appoint a spokesman. They did so, and appointed E. F. Hartzler of Marshallville, Ohio. At an opportune time they came into the tent in a body and their representative said in part:

"We heartily thank the conference for the interest that it is taking in us, and especially for the privilege of expressing our wishes before this body. We thank you for the prayers that are being offered in our behalf and for the document that was drawn up and passed yesterday. Many in our meeting expressed themselves that by God's help they wanted to stand by the thoughts presented in the resolution, and they hoped that when the trying hour came the prayers of the whole brotherhood would ascend in their behalf, and that God would give them grace to stand. Not a word of resentment was spoken by any one, but the wish was expressed that the Gospel of Jesus Christ might be lived out whether in the presence of officials or any other class of people with whom we would come in contact. We thank you again for your interest and pray God to bless you and us."

Committee Sent to Washington

These were hours of suspense. The committee appointed to go to Washington proceeded on their journey direct from the conference, and on Saturday morning, in company with two other committees, one from the Old Order Amish Mennonites and one from the Franconia Mennonite Conference (who had previously arranged a meeting with Secretary Newton D. Baker) came before the Secretary of War on the same day. The Secretary received them cordially and went over the situation with them very frankly. On the whole the meeting was very satisfactory. The committee sent day messages direct from Washington to the various sections informing the brotherhood of the favorable reception and ask-

ing them to look for a night letter on Sunday morning. In addition to these, letters were sent out by mail giving more details. Here is a copy of the letter:

"Washington, D. C., September 1, 1917. Dear Brother:—In an interview with Secretary Baker, who received us kindly, we received the following information and instructions:

"1. That none of our brethren need to serve in any capacity which violates their creed and conscience.

"2. When they are called they should report at the place designated on their notice.

"3. From the place designated on their notice they should go with others who are drafted and called to training camps.

"4. Report to army officer the church to which they belong, and their belief in its creed and principles.

"5. This nonresistant position will place them in detention camps where they will be properly fed and cared for.

"6. In these camps they will not be uniformed nor drilled.

"7. A list of service considered noncombatant will be offered, but they need not accept any in violation to their conscience.

"8. Those who can not accept any service, either combatant or non-combatant, will be assigned to some other service, not under the military arm of government.

"9. Our ministers will be allowed to visit the brethren in these camps and keep in touch with them.

"10. Our ministers will be privileged to give this information and advice to our brethren in private or in public meetings.

"As a committee appointed by General Conference, assembled at Yellow Creek Church near Goshen, Indiana, August 29, 1917, in consultation with a committee appointed by the Franconia Conference, and a committee of Old Order Amish brethren, we are unanimously agreed to advise the following:

"1. Since our interview with the war department we advise our brethren to state their position on the Church, creed, and principles to army officers at mobilization camps.

"2. We again encourage our brethren not to accept any service, either combatant or noncombatant, under the military arm of government in violation of their conscience and the creed or principles of the Church.

"While our brethren will not be freed entirely, yet

freed from serving under the military arm of Government, we should be very grateful for the consideration that the authorities have shown us. May our churches everywhere continue to send prayers to the Throne of Grace in behalf of our young brethren in this trying hour and for those in authority so "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life."

"Your brethren, Aaron Loucks, S. G. Shetler, D. D. Miller, General Conference Committee."

The letter as published aroused great interest on the part of nonresistant people, members of other churches as well as Mennonites. I. W. Taylor and W. J. Sweigert, members of the Church of the Brethren, desiring confirmation of the information sent out by the General Conference committee, arranged with Congressman Greist of Lancaster Co., Pa., to have an interview with Secretary Baker and from him received the following note under date of Sept. 16, 1917: "Mr. Baker confirmed in his interview with these gentlemen all the 10 points except the 8th." Immediately the point in question was restated. As corrected it read: "Those who can not accept any service under the military arm of the government will be held in detention camps to await such disposition as the government may decide upon." A corrected copy of the above letter was sent to Secretary Baker and the following answer was received:

"War Department, Washington, D. C., Sept. 14, 1917
"My Dear Mr. Loucks:

"The Secretary of War asks me to thank you for your kindness in sending him a copy of the corrected form of statement regarding the interview referred to which is entirely satisfactory to him.

"F. P. Keppel."

The purpose of these special meetings was to give specific instructions as to what the decisions of the war department were, and what might be

expected by those who remained at home as well as those who would be called to camp. One of the leading things emphasized in the meetings was that great care should be exercised to give as little offense as possible, either to individuals or to Governments; that all official commands should be obeyed so long as they were not in opposition to the principles of the Gospel, but that at all hazards the brotherhood should give full allegiance to the teachings of Christ and His apostles. It would not have been possible nor advisable to try to work out details in these meetings as they would come to each individual. Many wished for even more specific directions, but those who followed closely the instructions which were given found them a great help when the trying hour came.

CHAPTER VI

OUR BRETHREN IN CANADA

Difference between U. S. and Canada

Conditions were quite different in the United States and Canada so far as the war was concerned. The latter, being a part of the British Empire, was in the struggle from the beginning. Laws in the two countries were not very different so far as non-resistants in general were concerned, but peculiar to say, they made a difference between Mennonites and others who upheld that doctrine. Because of these things it will be necessary to refer to our brethren in Canada separately. So far as this doctrine is concerned, the Church in the two countries might as well have been considered together.

Exemption Laws

The first laws exempting Mennonites and others from military service were made more than a quarter of a century after our people had settled in Canada. The first such law, 1808, under King George III, mentioned Quakers, Mennonites, and Tunkers as exempt from military duties and service in time of peace or war, but required the payment of certain sums of money in lieu of such service. At that time there were settlements of Mennonites in Lincoln and Waterloo counties in Upper Canada, now Ontario. This law continued with a number of

amendments until 1855, when Quakers, Mennonites and Tunkers, or members of any denomination whose religion were adverse to bearing arms, were allowed exemption from military service in times of peace or war, without the payment of money. This law continued in force until the passing of the Military Service Act, 1917. It is commonly thought by people outside of Canada that the law of 1868 was passed in order to get the Russian Mennonites to move to Canada, but it existed several years before the Canadian Government knew of the unrest among the Mennonites in Russia. The Order-in-Council providing for Russians was made in 1873. H. H. Ewert says, "It should be noted that the exemption of Mennonites, Quakers, and others from military duty does not rest upon, nor date from, an Order-in-Council adopted in 1873, (This is the date of making final plans with the Mennonites in Russia) but upon a statute of law passed in 1868, which is not a measure of a special inducement to intending settlers, passed for the occasion, but a statement of policy and principle." S. F. Coffman writes, "The law of 1868 is cited in the Order-in-Council in 1873." These three laws were not war measures, but were made in times of peace.

Russian Immigration

When the Russian government refused to support the promise of their former Czarina, Catharine II, giving the Mennonites exemption from military service they sent a committee to America to examine the laws of Canada and the United States. The committee of the Privy Council of Canada, after examining into the matter and reporting that the

Act of 1868 especially named the Mennonites as having exemption from all military service, also recommended that the fullest consideration be given to the Russian Mennonites. The Canadian government, by Order-in-Council passed July 23, 1873, extended to the Russian brethren conditions which were very satisfactory. The following is a part of the Order:

"An entire exemption from military service is by law and Order-in-Council granted to the denomination of Christians called Mennonites. The fullest privilege of exercising their religious principles is hereby afforded to the Mennonites without any kind of molestation or restriction whatever."

Benefits to other Mennonites

While this Order was passed primarily for the benefit of the Russian Mennonites who, on the strength of the Order, moved to Western Canada, the same favor was accorded to Mennonites in all parts of the Dominion because of the Order and because of the statutory provisions of 1868 which were repeated in the statutes of 1886, and reasserted in the revisions of 1906. No distinctions were made between Russians and other classes of nonresistant people until the war broke out and the Military Service Act of 1917 was passed. In the Act provisions were made for certain classes who were not to be called into service and who would be in no way amendable to the act. Among those were certain religious orders, ministers of the Gospel, Government officials and those persons who came under the special treaties of 1873 (the Russian Mennonites) and of 1898 (the Doukobors from Russia).

Difference, East and West

After the passing of the act of 1917 there was

a difference made by the officials between Mennonites of the East and West. All of those living west of Ontario were considered as under the Exceptions of the Act, and were not to be called for service, were not required to register or claim exemption on any grounds. Those Mennonites, Quakers, and Tunkers who had previously enjoyed total exemption from military service who were living in Ontario were considered amendable to the Act and were required to register and claim exemption. The brethren in the West were notified to do so also and this led to some complications with the officials of the West which were later adjusted.

Where it was the desire of the officials to stand by the conditions of the Order-in-Council of 1873, the Russian Mennonites in the West were not molested, but this was not the case everywhere. In some places they were required to register and claim exemption. Many complicated forms and various affidavits and declarations were used to prove their church membership, parentage, etc. Their ministers were obliged to fill out affidavits concerning the faith of the Church and their own standing with it. Some of the officials seemed to have a determination to overthrow the grounds of their claims for exemption and compel the Russian Mennonites to take military service. However, the government at Ottawa constantly asserted their purpose to stand by the conditions of the treaty, and to regard the Order-in-Council as a sacred obligation, with the result that none of the brethren were obliged to enter the service. Some few were forced into the military units, but when their cases were appealed to the higher authorities they were excused.

Noncombatant Service Expected

The ground for and the extent of exemption that could be expected is shown in the following which is a part of the Act of 1917:

"That he conscientiously objects to the undertaking of combatant service and is prohibited from so doing by the tenets and articles of faith, in effect on the 6th day of July, 1917, of any organied religious denomination existing and well organized in Canada at such date, and to which he in good faith belongs. A certificate (of exemption) may be conditional as to time or otherwise, and, if granted solely on conscientious grounds, shall state that such exemption is from combatant service only."

Provision was made in the application to insert the name of the denomination to which the applicant belonged. Mennonites and Tunkers signing this declaration, would compromise the faith of their churches which forbids all military service—not combatant service only—and many qualified their statement by writing in, "Which forbids all military service." The Act did not properly describe the faith of purely nonresistant people save in the conditions under which the Russian Mennonites were "excepted" from the Act, for they were averse to all forms of warfare and their faith was thus recognized and honored by granting them perpetual freedom from all military service. The Mennonites in the East were in perfect agreement with their Russian brethren on this point, and realizing that those in the West had complete exemption, those in the East appealed to the government at Ottawa for complete exemption from any service in furthering the war.

Church Letters

While registering, those who desired to claim

exemption were required to present certificate of Church membership. The certificates of the Russians stated that they were sons of Mennonite parents, and that they were under the provision of the exceptions of the Act, according to the Order-in-Council of 1873. The certificates of others stated that they were members of ——— Church since (date), and that the doctrines of the Church forbids all military service. Those who united with the Church after the date mentioned in the Act were at first refused exemption of any kind, but it was later arranged that those who as sons of Mennonite or Tunker parents who had in good faith united with the Church at a later date were exempted with the others.

Norman B. Stauffer

Mennonites in the West came in touch with the district registrars at Calgary and Regina. Norman B. Stauffer, a Mennonite bishop, was so located as to make it necessary for him to pass through Calgary very frequently, and in so doing, usually called on the district registrar. He had frequent occasions to sign papers for the young men who had appealed their claims for exemption and thus became well acquainted with those whose duty it was to determine who in that section of Canada should or should not be excused from military service. While it was not the purpose of Government to oblige the Mennonites in the West to register or serve in the militia, those who did register according to instructions received from officials, and who claimed exemption on religious grounds, were refused exemption by local boards, when they ap-

pealed to the district boards. Although some of these brethren had been obliged to take the medical examination and were called to report for service, after making several trips to Calgary, Bro. Stauffer succeeded in having all of them released.

While Canada had not inaugurated the "Work or fight" plan, as was done in the United States, they especially urged that since their sons were exempt, Mennonites should do all that they could to produce food, and this resulted in a large acreage in wheat and other food products. On the whole the Mennonites in the West fared very well, and were grateful to God and the officials for the recognition given to their religious convictions.

An Interpretation Wanted

As previously stated, there seemed to be more uncertainty among the officials as to the exact status of the Ontario Mennonites. They wanted to be true to the previous promise, and at the same time desired to carry out the requirements of the Military Service Act, as previously given. The body of the nonresistant churches stood for no service under the military establishment. The act provided for exemptions, but when made on religious grounds, exempted from combatant service only. These were days of anxiety. A committee was appointed by the Mennonite Conference, and by other Mennonite, Amish, and Tunker bodies to act jointly in looking into these matters. They were united in their views that all military service was inconsistent with nonresistance and they acted accordingly. A letter was sent to the department of justice at Ottawa, asking for an interpretation of the act as it affected the

Mennonites. Reports had been circulated that the Ontario Mennonites would not be exempt. A meeting of representatives from the Mennonite and Amish Churches in the district was called at Kitchener, Ont., for prayer for help and direction from God in this time of extreme need. An answer to the letter from the department of justice was received just before the meeting, stating that the matter had been brought before the Council of Militia and that it had been decided that the Mennonites were under the "Exceptions of the Act," and had no duty to perform whatsoever. The meeting for prayer was changed to a meeting of praise.

Local and District Tribunals

The act required that all persons (excluding excepted classes) should register, and either register for service or make claim for exemption from service. This led to complications with local tribunals appointed to pass on applications, since the department of justice had stated that our people were under the exceptions, and that such persons were not required to register nor to claim exemption. A delegation representing the nonresistant bodies interested met the Premier of Canada and the Minister of State at Ottawa for the purpose of seeking a solution of the difficulties which had arisen. These representatives of Government advised that, according to the meaning of the Act, all the members of the nonresistant churches should register; that the exceptions to the act were intended primarily for the Russian Mennonites, and while others would be required to register and apply for exemption on account of religious belief, they would not be o-

bliged to take the medical examination. It was also stated that they would not be called except for non-combatant service, but it was doubtful if such service would be required since that department was well supplied, and in case such service should be needed the committee would again be consulted. Under these conditions the brethren in these churches were advised to register and did so, claiming exemption.

No Uniform Decisions

The local tribunals failed to give uniform decisions on the applications for religious exemptions. In a few districts only were decisions given in agreement with the decision of the department of justice granting total exemption. Where limited exemptions were given, appeals were made to the district tribunals, and if no adverse decision was received appeals were taken to the Central Appeal Judge at Ottawa. The district tribunals almost uniformly sustained the decisions of the local tribunals, and granted exemption only from combatant service. The Tunker brethren were usually not recognized as having any claim for release from service and nearly all of their young men were called to camp.

Work of the Committee

In the meantime the committee continued its efforts with the government to secure the recognition which our faith demanded of us. The decisions of the local and district tribunals did not accord with the decisions of the Chief Justice who was the Central Appeal Judge. To show the difference of opinion expressed by the various officials a few ex-

tracts will be recorded. A letter signed by the Ontario Registrar is here quoted in full:

"Toronto, Ont., July 4, 1918.

"Dear Sir: In reply to your letter of the 3rd, I beg to inform you that since our interview of the 19th Ult., we have received instruction from Ottawa that the Ontario Mennonites are in exactly the same position as the Tunkers and are not exceptions to the Act, but must register and claim exemption on religious grounds in exactly the same manner as other conscientious objectors. I understand that the Chief Public Representative has written to the bishops of the Mennonite Church in Ontario, instructing them that those men are in Class I, of the Military Service Act as now defined, will be required to register at once if they have not already done so."

A different opinion was expressed by the deputy registrar of London, Ont., to the local tribunal at Milverton, Ont., in a letter dated November 7, 1917:

"All these Mennonite people, of course, are exempted from the Act, and so long as you are fully satisfied that they are in fact Mennonites, you have no option but to give them exemption."

Another letter from the same registrar at Toronto, which was quoted before shows how insistent he was in trying to get our people to take up military service:

"In view of what has passed between us, I venture to again call your attention to the advisability of the members of your community holding a conference with a view of seeing whether you can not see your way to make a compromise on the subject of noncombatant service with the hospital corps or other noncombatant units. With the example of your brethren in the Napoleonic wars and during the American Civil war, it seems to me that you could find some better use for your young men than have them sent to prison."

From such conflicting evidence the committee gathered that it was necessary to secure a uniform decision regarding the Mennonites and Tunkers, and to secure relief from the pressure that was being used to force members into the service, and to secure

the liberty of some who had been called and were held in military units in the various districts.

Parliament and the Committee

Evidence was at hand to show that there was no clear well-defined policy on the status of Mennonites and Tunkers; that it depended a great deal on the personal consideration which the officers gave to the religious convictions of these people as to the interpretation which they gave of the Act as it applied to these nonresistants; that there was a determined effort on the part of some to force these conscientious objectors into service or into prison.

The committee found several special friends who were members of the House of Commons who understood the character and the spirit of the people represented by the committee. One of them wrote to the committee as follows: "It is very unfortunate that in the Military Service Act you were not exempt in full, the same as the Russian Mennonites. I am discussing this question at every opportunity with those in authority and will let you know of any changes in the situation." In another letter the same party wrote, "Mr. —— and myself have been endeavoring yesterday and today to have matters arranged so that your people will be exempt from the operations of the Order-in-Council recently passed, calling to the colors the young men from nineteen to twenty-three. In this we think we have been successful. We had an interview yesterday with the Militia Council. The Minister of the Militia was present and after discussing the whole situation thoroughly, it was arranged that we should secure from your Church the names of bishops or

some one in authority who would issue certificates of membership in your Church. The officer commanding the military district would be authorized to accept these certificates and allow the men off on leave."

Leave of Absence

Notice the last thought, "Allow the men off on leave." Leave of absence was to be the solution for the time being. While Mennonites and others were required to register and report to the commanding officer when called, the officer was instructed to issue a leave of absence which could be extended indefinitely. This plan should have worked well, but for various reasons and pretexts some brethren were held in camps, in the guard-house, or in the jail. Some were court-martialed and sentenced, and sent to the military prison.

In most cases, however, the brethren were permitted to leave camp as soon as they presented well authorized certificates and the officers could arrange their leave of absence. Most of the persecutions arising from misunderstandings with officials may be traced to the fact that some men magnified their authority, took matters into their own hands, thus proving themselves untrue to the government they represented. From such, some of the young men suffered, but it should be said to the credit of the government that some such officers were called before higher authorities to answer for their misdemeanor.

Among the Mennonite young men there were those who were called before the tribunals a number of times to substantiate their claims for exemp-

tion. They were allowed to have the assistance of their parents or ministers. As a rule they held firm regardless of the harshness and cruelty of the officers who often shamefully reproached their religious convictions. A number were detained in barracks and guard-houses for refusing to put on the uniform. Some were forced into a uniform but refused to perform any service. Some of these were soon released pending a reconsideration of their cases, or for work on the farm.

The leave of absence finally secured the release of all. A few accepted the uniform in order to escape persecution but refused to perform military service and were detained at fatigue duty of a non-military nature until their release was secured.

Among the Tunker brethren, who for a long time received no recognition from the military authorities, conditions were a little more severe. The fact that the Mennonites were named in the exceptions of the act gave the Ontario Mennonites some prestige. The Tunkers were treated the same as all other conscientious objectors, were accounted as offenders, and were required to suffer the penalties for refusing all military service. At least four of their brethren were court-martialed and three were sent to the military prison where they were obliged to dig stumps and perform other work of a like nature under great difficulties. Through the appeals of the committee the Tunker brethren also secured recognition and the certificates of their bishops were honored by the release of all their brethren. The sentences of the courts-martial were canceled and the officers issued the leave of absence, thus freeing them of all military duty.

By the leave of absence plan the nonresistant young men were allowed to remain at home, and thus were among Canada's best producers instead of being consumers only and accomplishing no immediate good as so many were forced to be in camps and guard-houses because they could take no part in the war. Canada finally solved the religious objector question better than most other countries engaged in the war.

The attitude of Government was much appreciated, and the nonresistant bodies which had been accorded these favors united in their efforts to raise a large relief fund, provided Government would use it for such purposes as would be acceptable to the Church. This is expressed in a resolution passed by the committee appointed by the several churches concerned:

"Whereas, we, Mennonites and Tunkers whose tenets of faith forbid engaging in any form of military service in time of peace or war desire to help bear the burdens due to the war, therefore,

"Resolved, that we, the Nonresistant Relief Organization, recommend that a generous fund be raised among the churches interested which shall be donated to Government as a memorial of appreciation for the privilege of religious liberty, and our freedom from military service; which fund shall be used for relief and charitable purposes; and that a committee be appointed which shall interview the government for suggestions as to the disposal of the said donation according to our faith.

"We further recommend that we encourage a continued support of the relief and charitable work during the continuance of the war, and as long thereafter as is deemed advisable by this organization."

In a report of this resolution to the Premier of Canada it was stated: "We trust, Sir Robert, that this movement may meet the approval of your government, and submit to your judgment the matter

of conferring with you, or with such members of Government as you may suggest, regarding the purpose of this organization, and shall await your pleasure and bidding."

A committee from the Relief Organization met two members of Parliament at Ottawa, March 27, 1918, and the following is a part of the committee's report to the churches:

"The members of Government gave your committee a very attentive hearing and are very much interested in the purpose of the organization. We presented our petition, a copy of which is enclosed, requesting them to advise a method of procedure and the proper application of the funds to be donated, and we also stated the condition which at the present time seems to interfere with the carrying out of our purpose. We presented to the government a statement as per second enclosed copy, showing how there appear to be conflicting issues between our nonresistant faith and the provisions of the Military Service Act.

"The members of Government whom we met promised to take up these matters with their fellow-members and with the proper officials at the earliest possible moment after the Easter recess and forward to your committee a report thereupon. They were glad for the explanation of our situation and felt to give us the fullest assurance that our interests would not be disregarded, and our complete exemption from military service would be allowed."

Note that the committee had two purposes in meeting the officials: First, to discuss the question of the Relief fund; Second, to try to get total exemption from military service. Just six weeks after this interview with the members of Parliament the secretary of the organization sent out the following information to the churches: "The Ontario Registrar at Toronto, Mr. C. L. Wilson, has received instruction from the Military Service Council, that Mennonites are outside of the Act and are exempt. Some have already reported that they are Mennonites and have received exemptions."

The early appeals of our brethren to Central Appeal Judge at Ottawa, asking for complete exemption, were decided according to the letter of the Act, and they were allowed relief from combatant service only. There was considerable difference of opinion among the officials at Ottawa regarding the status of the nonresistant people who had formerly enjoyed entire exemption. A final decision must have been made concerning this question, since later appeals to the same court by some of our brethren were acted upon by the Central Appeal Judge who decided that these persons were under the exceptions, and that neither local nor appeal tribunals nor the Central Appeal Judge had any right to act in these cases. This decision was given toward the close of hostilities. But the churches were grateful for this final decision from the highest tribunal in the government.

The expressions of gratitude on the part of the churches were many, and thanksgiving to God was evident in the earnest manner in which the churches engaged in relief work and many other worthy objects demanding attention and service. The relief fund was heartily supported, as in some congregations the heads of families contributed at the rate of one hundred dollars each, the young men of military age giving fifty dollars, and the single sisters each thirty dollars. It is also evident that some who were more able gave proportionately less than this, but the response was hearty and the thanksgiving great.

CHAPTER VII

OUR BRETHREN IN THE DRAFT

Draft Boards

From the time it was declared that a state of war existed, the officials at Washington were busy preparing for a large army. Full draft regulations were gotten out which provided for one or more local draft boards in practically every county in the United States and a district board in each Federal judicial district. The former had original jurisdiction on all questions except industrial and agricultural claims for exemption and deferred classification. These were decided by the district boards. Local boards arranged for the registration of all men in their territories between twenty-one and thirty-one years of age.

Registration

On June 5, 1917, all men within the age limit were required to register at their respective voting places. Special arrangements were made for those who were away from home, or were sick at that time. Here came the first real test on the nonresistant principle. A stand must be taken somewhere —but where? Shall they register? Some thought that the place to take a stand was in the very beginning; that nonresistant people should not register at all. Others thought that since there was no

infringement upon the doctrine in so doing, every one should register. With so little discussion of the subject, it is remarkable how very few did not comply with the law. The following is the form that was used:

1. Name in full.
2. Home address.
3. Date of birth.
4. Are you (1) a natural born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared intentions. (Specify which) Town, State, Nation.
5. Where were you born?
6. If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject?
7. What is your present trade, occupation or office?
8. By whom employed?
9. Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12 solely dependent on you for support? (Specify which)
10. Married or single. (Which)?
11. What military service have you had? Rank, branch, years, nation or state.
12. Do you claim exemption from the draft (Specify grounds)?

I affirm that I have verified the above answers and that they are true.

Signature .....

A Scare

In the morning of registration day, word went out from Washington, and in many cases reached those who were conducting the registration about noon, that it would not be necessary to fill out number 12, as that matter would come up again in the examination. In order to save time then and later in the tabulation, it was considered best not to have it filled out. Some of the registrants insisted on filling it out but many did not, and later decided that they had been trapped—that this was simply a scheme to get the nonresistant boys into the service. The news went like wild-fire, but when explained by

a local board a few days later gave general satisfaction. This is simply one of many conditions which for a time would cause anxiety.

Experience taught us later that while it was not always safe to trust the inferior officers, there was little or no reason to distrust the officials of the War Department at Washington. They might not have understood us, or they might have considered our position both wrong and impractical, or their own plans did not always work out as expected and would have to be changed, but they at least tried to be just and considerate.

Confidence Instilled; Examinations

The letter sent out by the General Conference Committee after their interview with Secretary Baker helped a great deal to bring confidence, and in the main body of Mennonites the general sentiment prevailed that the brethren in the draft as well as all others should go just as far as they could without violating a Gospel principle. This would permit the young men to take the examination and go to camp. In many cases the examinations were very meager and very poorly done, as was shown by the many who were rejected after reaching camp.

Some boards were very considerate and refused to send those to camp who were evidently sincere in their convictions against war, and who in the past had proven themselves to be good producers. They believed that such men would be a greater benefit at home than they could possibly be in camp under the circumstances.

Exemptions

The first draft regulations provided that those

who could not take combatant service should get from their local boards form number 174. This excused them from "any service except such service as the President should define as noncombatant." Calling for this form angered some boards. One member of such board said, "There is no number 174. See, here is the book of forms, and number 173 is the last one in the book." It was so, but form 174, for good reasons, had been placed between numbers 143 and 144. This is an illustration of how well these things were studied by some boards. There may be two reasons for this: First, the chairman of one such local board said, "It is simply impossible for us to go over all the instructions which we get and do our other work besides. It would keep one man busy all the time to keep posted;" Second, one could not blame these men for not looking up some special way for people to get out of service when part of their work was to get people into it.

This method of recruiting the army was not very satisfactory because there were too many complications in it and because there was no uniformity. A radical change was made which was supposed to bring about uniformity and greatly simplify the work. All registered men were required to fill out a sixteen-page questionnaire. Some of the questions required as many as five answers, so that all told there were about two hundred twenty-five questions to answer, but they were so arranged that no one need answer all of them. These answers were supported by affidavits. From these questionnaires (and other information if thought necessary) the local boards divided the registrants into five classes. Class

I was to be called first, then class II, and so on. The officers at Washington did not believe that any except class I would be needed, but a few were called from class II, where there were not enough in class I to fill the quota. Class V was exempt. There were nine divisions in that class, but only four which generally concerned nonresistants. They were, First, ministers of the Gospel; Second, students preparing for ministry; Third, resident aliens (not enemies); Fourth, persons physically or mentally unfit for military service.

Other registrations and classifications were made later, one for the young men who had become of age after the first registration, and one to include all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five.

Effect of the Questionnaire

As already noticed, the purpose of the questionnaire was to get unanimity of action on the part of the boards, both local and district. It was an improvement over the old method but it came far short of producing uniformity. To illustrate: page fifty of the Selective Draft Regulations, section 79, rule XII, says, "In class V shall be placed any registrant found to be; a .....; b. A regularly or duly ordained minister of religion." In a note below, the Regulations very clearly show what is meant by such "minister of religion." Regardless of this, quite a number of ministers who were ordained in exactly the manner, and for the purpose set forth in the Regulations were required to go to camp just the same as if they had not been ordained, and one was even sentenced to the disciplinary barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The other side of

this is illustrated by the action of another board when the bishop appeared before it and said, "I notice that you have one of our young ministers in class I, when it seems to us that he should be placed in class V. Please read here what the Regulations say about it and see whether you do not think so too." The member of the board read it and said, "Certainly he belongs in class V, and will be placed there." The bishop went out after having heartily thanked the members of the board and met the young brother who was doubly surprised, First, at seeing his bishop there, not knowing that he was within a hundred miles, and, Second, at being shown a re-classification.

Giving the Soldiers a "Send-off"

Elaborate preparations were made to give the soldier boys a great "Send-off," when the first few contingents went to camp. The band played, and the boys were marched through the towns from which they were going to camp. Great crowds gathered at the depots long before train time. People tried to be jovial, talked, laughed, and gave the boys many pleasant goodbyes. But there were those in many of the crowds who were not in a mood to take part in jollities. Their boys were going away. They were to prepare for the front, or were to go to camp and there be persecuted for their faith. Would they see them again? The boys were not all laughing. There were those among them who believed that war is wrong, and that for them to even take part in these demonstrations and in the practices of the camp was wrong. They could take no part in the drill or other war preparations. War

was the prime object of it all, and that for them was wrong. Others might laugh now and talk brave, but knowing that they would be brought face to face with trials that were greater than going to the front gave rise to very serious thought.

The Position of the Church Tested

The doctrine of nonresistance was being tested. All religious bodies holding it as a tenet of their faith should have worked together for its maintenance, and especially for the benefit of their brethren in camp. Instead of this they often differed widely in their attitude taken toward their members in camp. Some were very radical, and urged unwise actions on their members going to camp; others were almost noncommittal. This latter position caused loss of confidence among the boys in the leaders of their churches, and the boys soon learned to go to others who were known to take more of a middle ground. Here they received what they could not get from their own ministers and often kept up correspondence with their new advisors rather than to correspond with their own pastors.

One young man writing from camp said, "It is doubtful whether the government will consider the ——— Church as nonresistant hereafter. Her ministers visit the boys in camp but the boys can get no help from them in the solution of problems arising here....They seem to be afraid." The opposite of this was shown in some of the smaller nonresistant bodies who thought that it was inconsistent with the nonresistant doctrine to do anything in camp, even to keep their own quarters clean or to cook their own food. Mennonites as a rule considered

that it was the proper thing to do anything in the way of providing for the comfort of self and others, stopping short of noncombatant military service. With this lack of unity as to the application of the nonresistant doctrine, it is not surprising that there should be a difference in the actions of the boys in camp.

As a rule the attitude of the Mennonite young men in camp was in harmony with the attitude of the Church at home, as expressed in her conference decisions. A very few, indeed, took regular service, a few more took some form of noncombatant service, but by far the greater number stood for no service aside from cleaning up in and around their barracks and preparing their own food.

Lack of Uniformity in Camp Officials

Some officers in camp, like some boards, took matters into their own hands regardless of orders from Washington. The Secretary of War issued an order April 27, 1918, and reiterated it July 30, 1918, which reads,

> "If, however, any drafted man, upon his arrival at camp either through the presentation of a certificate from his local board, or by a written statement addressed by himself to the commanding officer, shall record himself as a conscientious objector, he shall not against his will, be required to wear a uniform.

In spite of this a number were forced to wear the uniform, some for a short time only, others to the end of the war.

Getting Men to Accept Service

It was not the aim of the war department to call men to these camps and feed them and get nothing in return from them. One of the duties of

the officers was to get all men to accept service of some kind if that was possible with proper treatment. Here again methods differed. This is what occurred at one camp which is a fair sample of those used in several others:

One day an officer came into the C. O. barracks and said, "We need a number of men to tend the fires in the different Y. M. C. A. buildings in the camp. I was informed that the men in this detachment would not do this. I said that I did not believe it. Surely any Christian man can build fires in a Christian institution. A man is not a man, say nothing about being a Christian, who will not help along that much." With an oath he said, "I want to see whether there is any one here so small that he will not build a fire in a Y. M. C. A. All who are willing to do this work will please stand. Come now, be men." Not one arose. Several days later one came in who seemed to think that he could win the C. O.'s by flattery. He said, "Now boys, I have heard a great deal about you, and I feel sure that conditions are not as they are presented to me. I have always said that I believed that you were men —too much of men to desire to do nothing while others were dying for the welfare of their country. I recognize your religious convictions and would not ask you to take up combatant service, but I thought that you might be willing to take up some form of noncombatant service. If there are such here, let them stand." No one moved. "I see that I did not make myself clear; you would not need to go into any danger. You would be kept well back of the lines. Now how many will stand?" No one arose. "Well, possibly you do not want to cross the ocean.

We will need a great many men here. Will you do service if we promise you that you need not leave America?" (Same result as before.) "Well, pardon me, but you will surely be willing to help take care of soldiers who have been wounded and are to be placed into convalescent hospitals. You boys are Christians, and I respect your high standard, but surely it is the work of a Christian to help his fellowman. Doubtless you will all take this." With up-turned palms he moved both hands upward, saying, "Everybody rise for this work." Not a man stirred. He had said too much. He dare not show disgust, but he went out not very well pleased.

The graceful and manly way in which the boys suffered the taunts would have done credit to older and more experienced heads. The C. O.'s in a certain camp had been transferred to other barracks. The next Sunday morning an officer came in and said, "Everybody out." They all obeyed. The officer said, "Line up along here." They did so. Then he said, "Go all around these barracks for a space this wide and pick up all the cigar and cigarette stubs, and deposit them in this vessel." While the boys did this, the soldiers from the other barracks were looking out of their windows and making remarks of the kind that one would naturally expect from such a crowd. After they were through the officer said, "You are excused." Naturally the boys were stirred, but after they were all in the barracks again, one of their number said, "Now boys, we all know that this was done to disgrace us, but let none of us say one word in retaliation," and they did not. That was too much for the officer. Evidently he expected to have a quarrel, but when no one said

anything, arrangements were soon made for another transfer.

Trials awaited our brethren at every turn. So long as they could conscientiously obey the commands of the officers the food was sufficient and of good quality; but when some command was disobeyed, regardless of any convictions which the offender may have had, he was then placed into the guard-house. Here he did not always fare so well. Frequently these prisoners were put on an alternate diet, two weeks on bread (a very limited amount) and water, then two weeks on regular meals. But meals were not the only ills of the guard-house. Generally these places were infested with vermin and were occupied by the worst class of men in the camp—people who were used to fighting all their lives, and would fight on any pretense. One young man was placed into one of these prisons and the officer who took him there said, "Here is a C. O. You have my consent to pommel him as much as you please." To the credit of the prisoners, let it be said that he was not molested. In this, these ruffians showed more consideration than the officer. Some of the hardest trials in camp will be given in Chapter X in the boys' own words, and their religious privileges will be discussed in Chapter XIII under the general subject, Camp Visitations.

The C. O.'s a Trial to the Officers

The C. O. was not the only one who had trials in camp because of the doctrine of nonresistance. Think of the man who enlisted at the call of his country and was anxious to go to the front to "help make this country safe for democracy," then to find

himself placed in command of a lot of young men, full of life and vigor, but who refused to fight or even train. Whether he professed to be a Christian or not matters little; he can never understand such actions. Had his views harmonized in the least with that of the C. O., he would not have enlisted. No wonder the C. O. was often treated rather roughly. The wonder is that not a much larger number were made to suffer.

"Specially Qualified Officers"

The order of the President was that the C. O.'s should be "placed under the command of specially qualified officers of tact and judgment," but in many cases it would be difficult for an officer who desired "overseas service" to use his tact and judgment to the best advantage in the presence of those who to him seemed nothing short of slackers. This "tact and judgment" was to be sought, not with a view of entrapping the boys, but that by personal talks and other legitimate means as many as possible might be persuaded to take up arms and fight, and if that could not be attained then at least to accept non-combatant service.

General Bell

There were exceptions to this. Major General Bell of Camp Upton asked to be placed in command of the C. O.'s. In this case the C. O.'s were largely Socialists. By devoting much time and energy to his new charge he succeeded in getting a large number to accept combatant service, but there were not many General Bells. Most of the officers despised the C. O.'s and to be placed in charge of them was more than some could stand. Very often our boys

were made to suffer for it, but when we consider conditions we will not think so hard of some of these officials.

CHAPTER VIII

OUR BRETHREN IN THE DRAFT (Continued)

The Conscientious Objector

Those who refused to take any part in winning the war soon found themselves branded as "yellow," "slackers," "cowards," "Huns," "pro-German," or something else equally unkind. The name (borrowed from England) used by the war department to designate the drafted men who took such a stand was, "Conscientious Objector," and at first was intended to apply only to such as took this stand because they belonged to a Church which embodied nonresistance in its creed and because the men themselves believed that it would be wrong for them to have a part in carnal warfare. Later it was applied also to those who for other reasons refused to take part in this war. This was unfortunate. If the two classes had been kept separate, the first class would have been better understood.

General Crowder's View

The religious and political objectors were two distinct classes and were so considered by Provost Marshal General Crowder as well as by all other right thinking people. In the general's report to the Secretary of War on the first draft, made December 20, 1917, he says:

"Some boards treat religious and other conscientious objectors as one class, and say that when found honest,

they might as well be assigned to noncombatant service. But it should not be forgotten that the two classes are entirely distinct—legally, morally, and practically. They are legally distinct because the act of Congress expressly recognizes and gives a legal status to the one, but wholly ignores the other. They are morally distinct, because the one obeys what he regards as a divine mandate, binding the conscience of the believers and sanctioned by a settled tradition of their Church; while the other is merely choosing to accept the loose and untried speculation of modern theorists who avow no respect for religious Scriptures and profess no authority over the conscience. They are practically distinct, because the one includes an ascertainable group of individuals, registered in their sect, definitely fixed on May 18 (the date of the passage of the selective service act) and not capable of enlargement at will; while the other may include any one whomsoever who has chosen, after May 18 last, to make profession insincerely, of an opinion opposed to war; and thus this group, if recognized in practice, would inevitably become an easy and impregnable refuge for an unlimited number of slackers."

In speaking of the religious and political objectors, General Crowder further says:

"Only those men whose convictions against war were so deep as to risk any consequences of their stand, seemed to resist. The men whose principles were not real, or whose courage was weak, complied with orders and are performing military service....The whole experience of England and United States shows that either deep religious convictions or unusual intellectual independence is required to maintain so unpopular and heretical a position."

View of Norman A. Thomas

In the same report is this quotation from Norman A. Thomas:

"It is natural to think of the conscientious objectors as essentially religious....Not all conscientious objectors are avowedly religious, nor is religious conscientious objection confined to relatively small sects which have incorporated it in their creeds. Within the last generation there has geen a wide growth of peace sentiment in the churches. Then you have the young idealist among the intellectuals with whom humanity is a reality never served by the horrors of war, and a very much larger group of working men who have learned too well the solidiarity of

the working class to believe that the organized destruction of their brethren who march under a different national banner will hasten the dawn of real liberty and fraternity."

Denominations Represented

It is perfectly natural that people who held that it was a Christian duty to help win the war should claim that the conscientious objector was absolutely in the wrong, and especially so if he was a religious objector. The religious objectors came from about forty denominations, and the larger the number of their young men who refused to accept service, the more that denomination was reviled, and the more things were said about them that were absolutely untrue—and that very often by men who had every opportunity to know the truth. They were called, "stupid," "dull," "ignorant," and a score of other things which suggest mental deficiency; this, too, in spite of the fact that in at least several of the camps the C. O. detachment stood the best psychological test of any detachment in the camps, and despite the fact that a goodly number of them were college students and graduates, and even a few college professors.

Political Objectors

Among the political objectors were to be found the anarchist, whose purpose it was to break down all rule and order; the socialist, who had not the least religious objection to war but was opposed to this war regardless of his reasons for it; the man who would not fight because he was pro-German; and the idealist who chose "to accept the loose and untried speculations of modern theorists." Possibly one-third of those who held to their views as conscientious objectors and were court-martialed and

sent to the disciplinary barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, were political objectors. Whether or not this class should have had the same rights to exemptions as the religious objectors is not ours to discuss here. Our subject is primarily the religious objector.

Religious Objectors

The name, religious objector, may well apply to nearly all, if not all, the Mennonites who were called to camp. They were such, not simply because it was the creed of the Church, but having learned the Scriptures on the subject of war, they were ready to stand for those teachings regardless of results. They knew that children of God are not to be world rulers, but "strangers and pilgrims," that it is the business of the world to rule the world, and that this at times may mean war; but if they wanted to be fellow-heirs with Christ they must abstain from all wars, and with equal propriety from all that abets war.

On going to camp the religious objector with others was asked to do military service; but he realized that thereby he would be helping the war. He realized, too, that he must stem the tide somewhere, for everything in camp had for its object the very thing which in his mind was wrong—the taking of human life and the destruction of property. He wanted to be true—he could go no farther. If he had sought the easiest way he would have gone with the crowd. It would have required less courage to enter the trenches, to face the machine guns —yea, the cannon—than to stand against such odds.

But he is not his own; he must obey God at all costs.

Captain Hough

In some camps all that was necessary for the religious objector to do was to state his position plainly and honestly and show his card (form 174 or 1008) or write out a statement and send it to the commanding officer, but in other camps that seemed to avail nothing; all seemingly depended upon the officers. Captain Hough at Camp Sherman (Ohio) will always have the grateful consideration of the religious objectors at that camp for the way in which he dealt with the problem. At the same time, those who were not well founded or were untrue were more likely to be brought into service than under the methods used in some other camps. If there was any spirit of revenge in the hearts of the C. O.'s in some camps, the treatment would not soon have been forgotten. Curses and scoffs were not considered sufficient; kicks and blows became a part of the treatment.

The Board of Inquiry

On June 1, 1918, Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, appointed as a Board of Inquiry, Major Richard C. Stoddard; Julian W. Mack, judge of the United States circuit court of appeals; and Harlan F. Stone, dean of Columbia University Law School. About two and a half months later Major Stoddard was detailed for service in Europe and Major Walter G. Kellogg was appointed chairman in his stead.

The purpose of such a board was to examine all the C. O.'s in the various camps, to determine which ones were sincere, and to find the "slackers"

who were not slow in trying to find shelter under the plea of religion. It was originally intended that all the C. O.'s should be gathered into one central camp and all be examined there; but this was not done, and the board traveled from camp to camp, making long journeys and spending much time on the railroads.

Classification

To determine the sincerity of each and not do an injustice to anyone was not an easy task. A big job, little evidence, the unnatural environment for the C. O., all aided in making it more difficult. If he had joined the Church before April 6, 1917, had a certificate showing him to be a consistent member, had his card from the local board showing that it believed that he was entitled to the claims made in the printed form, and his answers were clear and satisfactory he was usually considered sincere. This board divided all parties examined into different classes and recommended them accordingly to the war department at Washington. Classifications were as follows:

1—A. Those found to be sincere religious objectors and recommended for farm or industrial furlough.

1—B. Those found to be sincere non-religious objectors and recommended for farm or industrial furlough.

1—C. Those found to be sincere conscientious objectors who are recommended for Friends Reconstruction Unit.

2—A. Those found to be sincere conscientious objectors as to combatant but not sincere as to noncombatant service, and who are therefore recommended to be assigned to noncombatant service.

2—B. Those found to be sincere conscientious objectors who are willing to accept, and who are therefore recommended for noncombatant service.

2—C. Those found to be sincere conscientious objectors, who are willing to accept service in and who are assigned to, reconstruction hospitals.

3. Those found to be insincere and assignable to any military duty.
4. Those objectors who are recommended to be sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, for further examination.
5. Those objectors who upon examination withdraw their objections.
6. Those found to be sick or unfit for examination, and recommended to be sent to a hospital for treatment.
7. Alien enemies or neutrals.
8. Those objectors who are recommended for mental examination and discharge, if not found competent.
9. Not in camp—not seen by board.
10. Under criminal charge—the board expresses no opinion until the decision of the court-martial.

In 1—A of the foregoing list reference is made to the farm furlough. Farm help was scarce before this country got into the war and was made much more so when thousands of young men were taken from the farms by the draft. There was a general cry for farm help. Women worked in the fields, but that was not sufficient. This demand for help was made the more positive because there were many C. O.'s in the various camps who were thoroughly familiar with farm labor and who would have been very glad to devote their time to such work instead of being in camp where they felt that they were no good to themselves, their country, nor any one else, at least so far as the food problem was concerned. Various plans had been proposed and finally the war department decided to have the C. O.'s, so recommended by the board of inquiry, put out on farms at such a price as would be satisfactory to both the camp officials and the farmer. In some cases the farmers were compelled to pay as much as sixty dollars per month, others from forty to fifty dollars. The C. O. received thirty dollars and the balance, in accordance with Government requirement, was given to the Red Cross. Some of the young men

were so anxious to be furloughed to some good farmer that when the camp officials asked more than the farmer was willing to pay the C. O. gave the farmer part of his thirty dollars. Some camps had arrangements by which all the money was paid to the camp, and the C. O. did not receive anything until he was discharged. At the same time he must furnish his own clothes and pay his incidental expenses. Either the farmer or the young man must pay the railroad fare. In many cases the farmer would not; the young man had not been earning anything as he had refused to accept the soldier's pay while in camp. In some cases at least there was something for the Church to do in seeing that this need was supplied.

Lack of Uniformity in Furlough Plans

It was intended that none should receive a farm furlough until after the examination by the board of inquiry, but that was not strictly adhered to. Nearly all the Mennonite boys were very glad to accept such furloughs so that they might be producers and not only consumers, as they must necessarily be in camp. The plan of getting the young men out depended almost exclusively on the camp officials. In some camps the farmer would have to appear and sign the necessary papers before the young man would dare leave the camp. In one case a young man was allowed to make applications for the furlough, sign up for the farmer, stop on the way to get his trunk and proceed to the farm eight hundred miles from the camp without any question as to whether he would get to the place alone.

It was generally understood that none of the

C. O.'s were to be furloughed to their home communities. One case, however, was found where the young man lived with his father before the war within two miles of the Ohio line, in Indiana. He had been sent to Camp Sherman (O.). One day a farmer came and asked for a C. O., and this boy was pointed out to him. The farmer and camp officials made the bargain as to the wages to be paid. On the way back to the farmer's home, the young man inquired as to the place where the farmer lived, his address, etc., and found that although he would be on a farm in Ohio, he would be only five miles away from his home.

In the majority of cases no attention was paid by camp officials as to whether the young men got into neighborhoods where they could worship with co-religionists or not. Many of them got into such communities because the farmers applied for certain boys and thus the desired end was reached, but this did not always work. One farmer went to camp and asked for a certain C. O. He was told that no word had come as to whether the board of inquiry had recommended him for a furlough. The farmer asked whether he could engage the young man conditionally, and whether it would help if he would wire him as soon as he heard that such recommendation had come. The officer said, "I promise nothing. If you wired me that you would be here at four o'clock this evening and a man came at three that wanted him I would not keep him for you. The man who is here when the recommendation comes is the man that gets him."

In some communities there were threats of violence when it became known that people who would

do nothing toward winning the war, were getting help for their farm work through the C. O.'s. In one neighborhood those who had received such young men decided that for their own safety as well as for the life of the young men it was advisable to send them back to the camp. In another community to which a goodly number of young men had been furloughed the feeling became so intense that threats of murder and incendiarism became frequent. Especially the C. O.'s were threatened. A party from the community phoned to the captain who had the C. O.'s in charge. He at once boarded the train, came into the neighborhood, and calling a meeting, told the people that they had better be careful; that these young men were in the service of the United States; that it had been planned by government authority to place these young men here, and that they were going to stay and they will be protected even if it is necessary to bring troops to defend them. That quieted the mob spirit, and the boys were not molested.

About sixty C. O.'s were furloughed to one of the western farms of more than six thousand acres devoted largely to corn-growing. Major Kellogg visited this farm and, speaking about the large corn crop, says, "Without the objectors it would have been impossible to harvest the crop. Certainly they proved a God-send to the farmer, and indirectly to the country at large. And the American Red Cross benefited substantially, as the treasury of that little country chapter would show....the report that he (the farmer) gave of them was most reassuring. They had, as a rule, worked faithfully and had

proved very capable farmers—in fact, he never had a better force of men on his farm."

Better Segregation Necessary

It would have been much better for the conscientious objector, religious or political, as well as for the soldier if the former had been hundreds of miles from any camp, or if there had been some civilian work which he could have taken up at less pay than the soldier received. At camp every line of work had for its purpose the abetting of war. The C. O. felt that this was wrong and hence he must refuse to work or violate his conscience. The former meant persecution; the latter a serious effect upon his character. The soldier would have been better satisfied with his lot and entered more enthusiastically into his work.

A suggestion was made to R. C. McCrea, civilian commissioner for conscientious objectors, that a number of churchmen be given the use of several thousand acres of land in the Pima Indian Reservation in Arizona during the war and have several hundred furloughed to this ranch. All that would have been above actual expense, all parties working for board and clothes, would have been given for reconstruction work. The commissioner approved of the plan, who soon after went to Washington to lay the plan before the authorities there; but just then the Germans began to retreat, and it was decided that it would hardly be needed. If the proposal had been made at the proper time, it is possible that the plan would have been adopted and that much of the dissatisfaction in camp might have been avoided.

Discharges

Those who had received farm furloughs were called back to camp some time after the signing of the armistice, and with those who did not receive furloughs, were discharged among the first after demobilization had begun. Many of those who had accepted noncombatant service were held longer. As a rule the discharges given at camp and at Fort Leavenworth disciplinary barracks were on blue paper which meant that they were neither honorable nor dishonorable. A very few C. O.'s who were among the first to be discharged received a white paper, or an honorable discharge, while some who were never court-martialed, had spent little or no time in the guard-house, and even before given their final release, were permitted to go to France for reconstruction work, were given a yellow paper, or a dishonorable discharge. Surely the ways of war are peculiar.

Accepting Pay

Most of the Mennonite boys refused to accept pay for the time spent in camp, but before being discharged they were required to sign the pay roll. A few signed, and then refused to accept the money. It is not very difficult to imagine what was done with it. A large number accepted the money and returned it to the United States treasury or to the war department, a few used it to buy equipment to go into the Friends reconstruction work, others gave it for relief work, and a comparatively small number accepted it and kept it, claiming that while they did Government no good, after all they were required to lose the time, hence had a right to the money.

The experiences of the C. O.'s were not pleasant, but many of them had an opportunity to live out a Gospel principle in such a way that even those who opposed them and persecuted them were bound to respect them for having a principle and living it regardless of results. The young men were made decidedly stronger by their experiences, provided they have been drawn closer to God and have become more like Christ. On the other hand, any exaltation that may grow out of these times of testing will mar that which should have proved a great blessing.

CHAPTER IX

OUR BRETHREN IN THE DRAFT (Continued)

Courts-Martial

Very few, if any, Mennonites would have been court-martialed if the war department would have been allowed time enough to get the farm furlough plan worked out; but some of the camp officials became very much dissatisfied, took advantage of a certain ruling of the department, and determined that the C. O.'s would work or get out of the camp. There was but one way to accomplish this. They must give ground for a charge of disobeying orders. Where this was planned, a noncommissioned officer would give a command (at Camp Taylor, Ky., that was usually to rake the ground preparatory to sowing grass seed), then the young man would explain that he could not conscientiously do that, giving his reasons, but the officer would not take that for an answer. He would repeat the command and then say, "Will you do it?" If the young man continued to explain, he was stopped and told to answer, "Yes," or "No." Yes meant that he would promise to do what he believed to be wrong, and would be violating his conscience. To say, No, meant that he would wilfully disobey orders. Another officer (a commissioned officer) came and went through the same process. Now there would be two witnesses and two violations. A court-martial was the natural

result. That meant a sentence of from five to thirty years at hard labor in one of the three disciplinary barracks in the United States: Fort Jay, Governor's Island, N. Y., Alcatraz Island, San Francisco Bay, Calif., or Fort Leavenworth, Kans.

Practically every one has heard of some of their friends being court-martialed, but do not have much idea of the process. For their benefit parts of one trial will be given. It is that of Bro. Allen Christophel, Camp Taylor, Ky. There were eleven jurymen (all except one were captains), the Judge Advocate and his assistant, and the prosecuting attorney. (To save space the following abbreviations will be used: P., prosecution; A., accused (which of course means Bro. Christophel); C., court; W., witness.)

P. "You have been given a copy of the charges?"
A. "Yes, sir."
P. "You have been informed that you have a right to have counsel?"
A. "Yes, sir."
P. "And that you have a right to testify in your own behalf?"
A. "Yes, sir."
P. "Do you desire to introduce counsel?"
A. "No, sir."

A reporter was then sworn in and Bro. C. was asked whether he wanted a carbon copy of the trial. He said that he did. He was asked whether he objected to being tried before any of these men. He answered in the negative. The two charges were then read. Notice that they are alike except that different persons are named.

CHARGE I: Violation of the 64th Article of War. Specification: In that Private Allen Christophel, 159th Conscientious Objector Detachment, having received a lawful command from 2nd Lt. Robert L. Maddox, Inf. N. A., his superior officer, to take a rake and rake the

ground, in preparation for sowing grass seed, within the area occupied by the Base Hospital, Camp Zachary Taylor, Ky., on or about the 2nd day of May 1918, wilfully disobeyed the same.

Charge II: Violation of the 65th Article of War. Specification: In that Allen Christophel, 159th Conscientious Objector Detachment having received a lawful order from Corp. Alexander Morrison, 14 Co. 4 Bn. 159 Depot Brigade, who was then in the execution of his office, to take a rake and rake the ground, in preparation for sowing grass seed, within the area occupied by the Base Hospital, Camp Taylor, Ky., on or about the 2nd day of May, 1918, wilfully disobeyed the same.

P. "How do you plead to the specification of Charge I?"

A. "I admit that I did not obey the order, but I plead not guilty of wilfully disobeying a lawful command."

P. "How do you plead to charge I?"

A. "I plead not guilty of disobeying a lawful command."

P. "How do you plead as to specification of charge II?"

A. "Read the specification, please. (The judge advocate here read the specification of charge II.) I admit that I disobeyed the order, but I plead not guilty of disobeying a **lawful** order."

P. "How do you plead to charge II?"

A. "Not guilty."

The paragraphs of the Courts-martial that set forth the gist of the several offenses, namely Paragraph 415 and Paragraph 416, were read to the court by the Judge Advocate.

2nd Lieutenant, Robert Maddox, Inf. N. A., 15th Company, 4th Bn., 159th Depot Brigade was first witness. After being sworn and answering to a few preliminary questions he was asked:

P. "Do you know the accused, if so, state his name."

W. "His name is Allen Christophel."

P. "How long have you known him?"

W. "I have known him since April 21, 1918. At that time he reported at the Conscientious Objector Detachment from the 14th Company, 4th Bn., 159 Depot Brigade."

P. "Did you have any relations with him on or about the 2nd day of May, 1918; if so, state to the court what they were."

W. "I did. I directed Alexander Morrison to take a detail of men over to the Base Hospital, and there wait for me. I got there and met the detail and found out the work that was to be done by them, and the work that was to be required, see that they were to rake some

ground there in the fore part of the ground of the Hospital, in the rear of the Base Hospital, rake the ground to receive grass seed. This accused was in the detail. First, we gave them rakes and told them to get busy raking the ground; about half of the number of the detail went to raking, and obeyed the order. This accused was among the number that refused to obey the order. I ordered Corp. Morrison to line them up and give each one of them the order individually, which he did, and this accused was one of those that refused to obey the order. I then took the rake myself and told the accused to take the rake and rake the ground. He said that he could not conscientiously do it. I told him that I did not care whether he could conscientiously do it or not, to take the rake and rake the ground. He insisted that he could not conscientiously do it. I told him either to tell me whether he would or would not, and he never would tell me whether he would or would not; but he refused to do the work."

P. "Pursuant to whose command did you send them over there?"

W. "It was pursuant to Col. Cloman's order. He was then commanding officer of the 159th Depot Brigade, and we were under his command."

P. "Did you have any conversation with the accused prior to this time?"

W. "I had. It was on or about April 24, 1918, I called the accused into the orderly room, and there I explained to him the executive order of President Wilson, dated March 20, 1918, and I insisted that he accept some service, which he refused to accept. The accused was also present at the assembly—he was in a group that was present in the mess hall of the Conscientious Objectors on about—well, it was just a short time, I think it was about April 24, 1918, probably it was later than that. Any way it was subsequent to the time that we went to the Base Hospital. At that meeting Judge Rutherford, I believe he was from New York, made a talk to the men, insisting that they take some noncombatant work. He was followed by Col. Cloman, who told them that if they did not do this work he would have them put into the guard-house and tried by Court-Martial, and he told them that it would be an offense, and explained to them what the offense would be. I did not read the Articles of War, but at the same time he refused to obey the order I told him what the Articles were, and what the circumstance was. When I got within about 25 yards of where I gave the order, I stopped the detail and said to them, 'Probably some of you do not understand the magnitude of your offense, and I want you to understand that the refusal to obey an order of an officer may be punished by death,

or by such other punishment as the court-martial may direct.'"

P. "What was your rank on this 2nd of May, 1918?"

W. "2nd Lieut., Infantry, N. A."

P. "Were you in command of that detachment on that day?"

W. "Yes, sir."

P. (To the accused) "Do you desire to ask him any questions, do you want to ask him any thing?"

A. "No, sir."

P. "Do you want me to ask him anything for you?"

A. "No, sir. There may be a few faulty dates but I suppose those will be cleared up."

P. "You can ask him any question you want to or later on you will be given an opportunity to make any statement that you want to."

A. "I do not think the question of dates will have any bearing on the case."

Corp. Alexander Morrison was sworn and answered a few preliminary questions then proceeded as follows:

P. "Do you know the accused; if so state who he is?"

W. "Yes, sir, Allen Christophel."

P. "How long have you known him?"

W. "Oh it has been about, better than a month."

P. "What was your rank on or about the 2nd day of May, 1918?"

W. "Corporal."

P. "Did you have any relations with the accused? If so, state to the court, in substance, what they were?"

W. "About taking him to work?"

P. "Yes."

W. "Why, we got a detail to march over to the Base Hospital, and march them over there to do some work, to sow grass seed. We got them lined up, and a lot of them went to work; and this man stood out and did not go to work, and I asked him why he didn't do it, and he said he could not conscientiously work, it was against his conscience."

P. "Were you in command of the detachment on that date?"

W. "Yes, sir."

P. "By whom were you given orders?"

W. "By Lieut. Maddox."

P. "What organization were you with at that time?"

W. "Conscientious Objectors."

P. "What organization was the accused with at that time?"

W. "Conscientious Objectors."

P. "State to the court what order you gave to the accused."

W. "I got him a rake and offered it to him, and told him to go out there and rake up the ground—loosen up the ground so as to sow grass seed."

P. "What did he say?"

W. "He said that he could not conscientiously do it."

P. "Did he do it?"

W. "No, sir."

P. (To the accused) "Do you desire to ask him any questions?"

A. "No, sir."

P. "Do you want me to ask him any for you?"

A. "No, sir."

P. "The prosecution rests."

The Court. "It becomes my duty to inform you of your rights and your privileges in this case. You can take the stand if you want to, and make a statement not under oath; in such case you will not be subject to cross examination by the judge advocate or the court. You can make a statement under oath; by so doing you will be subject to the same cross examination both by the judge advocate and by the court, and you are entitled to the same privileges, and have to share the same responsibilities as any other witness. You can call any amount of witnesses you want in your own behalf. You have heard what your rights are in this case; you can elect which course you desire to take. What do you desire to do?"

A. "I desire no witnesses. My creed—"

Court. "You do not have to take an oath, if you do not want to.

A. "I desire to make a statement not under oath."

"Court. "Now you can explain your side of the case to the court, any thing you want."

P. "State your name, your rank, and the organization to which you belong, and your location."

A. "My name is Allen Christophel; rank, private: I belong to the Conscientious Objector Detachment of the 159th Depot Brigade; Camp Zachary Taylor, Kentucky."

P. "You may now state anything that you desire, in your own defense."

A. "When I was taken to the hospital I was asked to rake preparatory to sowing grass seed, and I refused to do so, with no criminal intent, and with no intention to wilfully disobey a lawful order. I, at that time, considered the order unlawful, for a few reasons; but that was not the only purpose that guided me in refusing to work. In the first place, in conversation with Lieut. Maddox, he told me that this work was of a military nature. Furthermore, in reading concerning 'Assignment of Work,' under the Quartermaster's Department, I noticed that there was a clause called 'Working Gang,' and while I hadn't tech-

nically accepted service, I knew from it that I would be rendering military service; and according to one clause in the President's ruling, which says, 'but not to allow their objections to be made the basis of any favor or consideration, beyond exemption from actual military service,' I concluded that in harmony with that ruling I would not be required by that ruling to do that service.

"But that was not the main thing that guided me in refusing. There is nothing in my belief nor my creed that forbids me to rake grass seed. There is nothing in my creed and my belief that forbids me to do a number of other kinds of work in camp, but the thing that I objected to is, because this work and all other work under the military arm of the government has for its sole intent—one purpose, that of taking vengeance and that of destroying life—which thing has been taught against by our Church since it was founded in 1525. In 1632 their Confession of Faith was drawn up, and they made the following statement:" The accused then read the whole of Article XIV from the Mennonite Confession of Faith which is as follows:

Article XIV.

Defense by Force.

"'Regarding revenge, whereby we resist our enemies with the sword, we believe and confess that the Lord Jesus has forbidden his disciples and followers all revenge and resistance, and has thereby commanded them not to "return evil for evil, nor railing for railing;' but to "put up the sword into the sheath,' or, as the prophets foretold, 'beat them into plough-shares.'

"'From this we see, that, according to the example, life, and doctrine of Christ, we are not to do wrong, or cause offense or vexation to any one; but to seek the welfare and salvation of all men; also, if necessity should require it, to flee, for the Lord's sake, from one city or country to another, and suffer the spoiling of our goods, rather than give occasion of offense to any one; and if we are struck on our 'right cheek, rather to turn the other also,' than revenge ourselves, or return the blow.

"'And that we are, besides this, also to pray for our enemies, comfort and feed them, when they are hungry or thirsty, and thus by well-doing convince them and overcome the evil with good. Rom. 12:20, 21.

"'Finally, that we are to do good in all respects, "commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," and according to the law of Christ, do nothing to others that we would not wish them to do unto us.'

"I also wish to quote a very few scriptures." Here

the accused read Matt. 5:43-45, Rom. 12:19, Matt. 10:16, also Gal. 5:19-23.

"In regard to the position that I hold toward Civil Government, I wish to read from the Confession of Faith:

Article XIII.

The Office of Civil Government

"'We also believe and confess, that God has instituted civil government, for the punishment of the wicked and the protection of the pious; and also further, for the purpose of governing the world—governing countries and cities; and also to preserve its subjects in good order and under good regulations. Wherefore we are not permitted to despise, blaspheme, or resist the same; but are to acknowledge it as a minister of God and be subject and obedient to it, in all things that do not militate against the law, will, and commandments of God; yea, to be ready to every god work; also faithfully to pay it custom, tax, and tribute; thus giving it what is its due; as Jesus Christ taught, did Himself, and commanded His followers to do. That we are also to pray to the Lord earnestly for the government and its welfare, and in behalf of our country, so that we may live under its protection, maintain ourselves, and 'lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.' And further, that the Lord would recompense them (our rulers), here and in eternity, for all the benefits, liberties, and favors which we enjoy under their laudable administration.'

"The position that I take towards the government and the officers of this camp is one of obedience—do what I possibly can for them, and hesitate to obey when they command something that I can not do in accordance with the teachings of my Church, and the New Testament, as I understand them. We ought to obey God rather than man.

"I also wish to state that while at this time we are spoken of as not in favor of our country, rather, in many instances, as opposing it—the reason we take this position is not because we are favoring the enemy. It is rather because we are standing for a principle of not participating in war, that we are opposed to war as a moral issue, and as a New Testament teaching, and that the same position has been held by the Church ever since its foundation, and while we are holding aloof at this time (personally I think I speak in behalf of the entire group of our people) we are sincerely grateful to the authorities that they have given us the consideration that they have thus far. We are only hoping and longing for the time to soon come that we can do something helpful to our country, beneficial to mankind, and yet in accordance with our

Church and the New Testament, and for these principles I am willing to make any sacrifice in order to do something for humanity, and my country that is in harmony with the teachings of Jesus Christ."

Court. "Anything further?"

A. "That is all I have to say."

Court. "Any reply?"

P. "No."

The defense had no testimony to offer and no further statement to make the judge advocate submitted the case without remarks. The court closed and finds the accused—The findings were not specified in the copy of the court martial trial, but the sentence was ten years hard labor at Ft. Leavenworth disciplinary barracks or such place as the reviewing board may designate—followed by a dishonorable discharge from the United States army.

It would be interesting to read many more of the noble defenses made in behalf of the Gospel principle of nonresistance by others. It should be understood that others were just as conscientious as Mennonites and stood by their convictions with equal fortitude. The defense of one such made before the court-martial which sentenced him to hard labor in the disciplinary barracks of the United States is given here:

"To the best of my knowledge and belief, no order of the President or Secretary of War requires or expects me to do that which I regard as an act of sin. I did not regard the order (given me) as a lawful order, because I could not obey it without violating the dictates of my conscience and the plain teachings of God's higher law. I did not disobey the order in a wilful and obstinate manner but as quietly and respectfully as possible. Guilt signifies the doing of wrong. In declining to do the military work (given me) I did no more than to act in accordance with my conscience and deep religious conviction, and hence I did no wrong. For that reason I am not guilty as charged.

"I do not believe that I am seeking martyrdom. As a young man, life and its hopes and freedom and oppor-

tunities for service are sweet to me. I want to go out into the world and do my work and make use of what little talent I may have acquired by long and laborious study. But I know that I dare not purchase those things at the price of eternal condemnation. I know the teachings of Christ my Savior. He taught us to resist not evil, to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us. Not only did He teach this but He practiced it in Gethsemane, before Pilate, and on Calvary. We would, indeed, be hypocrites and base traitors to our profession if we would be unwilling to endure the taunts and jeers of a sinful world, and imprisonment, and the tortures of death, rather than to participate in war and military service. We know that obedience to Christ will gain for us the prize of eternal life. We cannot yield, we can not compromise, we must suffer.

"Two centuries ago our people were driven out of Germany by religious persecutors, and they accepted the invitation of William Penn to come to his colony where they might enjoy the blessings of religious liberty which he promised them. This religious liberty was later confirmed to us by the Constitution of Pennsylvania and by the Constitution of the United States. If those in authority now see fit to change those fundamental documents, and take away our privileges of living in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures of God, then we have no course but to endure persecution as true soldiers of Christ. If I have committed anything worthy of bonds or of death, I do not refuse to suffer or to die. I pray to God for strength to remain faithful."

Signed: .....

CHAPTER X

SOME EXPERIENCES IN CAMP

Many letters were received by parents, pastors, and others from our brethren in camp. A few of those have been gathered and extracts from them will be given here. Others who passed through trials even more severe were asked since their discharge to write up their experiences. Some have done so, but the larger number of them dwelt much more on the care and protection of God than on the severity of their trials. One said, "Somehow one does not care to remember the hardships and does not like to write them. We would rather think of the goodness and mercy of God in carrying us through, and forget the unpleasant experiences." This is a most commendable spirit. One remarkable feature of these letters is that there is not one word of resentment in them, but there are calls for prayer to God for help, not only for the suffering boys, but also for their officers and persecutors.

Many of the young men suffered at the hands of noncommissioned officers who tried to compel them to accept service of some kind under the military establishment. Some were placed into the stockades where the other prisoners heaped all kinds of abuse upon them. These prisoners held mock trials, passed sentences, and proceeded to carry them out. They usually consisted of some inconsistent

work, or that the party take a bath of alternate hot and cold water, and in some cases where compliance was not immediate the party was dragged under the shower and the water turned on without removing the clothing. It was not uncommon to see the supposed criminal dragged through the sand with his wet clothes on, then brought back and placed under the shower until the party became unconscious or so benumbed that he could scarcely walk.

Following are a few sample letters. The names and home addresses of the writers will be omitted:

Camp Lee, Va., July 16, 1918.

Dear Brother ———

Today some of us had the hardest experience that we have had since we came to camp. We were cursed, beaten, kicked, and compelled to go through exercises to the extent that a few were unconscious for some minutes. They kept it up the greater part of the afternoon, and then those who could possibly stand on their feet were compelled to take cold shower baths. One of the boys was scrubbed with a scrubbing brush, using lye on him. They drew blood in several places. I understand that tomorrow we are to be moved into tents back of headquarters and will be completely under the control of the Camp Sanitary Detachment with the rest of the C. O. boys. So the rough treatment is over so far as we are concerned, but I think that the officials at Washington should be notified so that conditions will be better for those who come later. It was the —— Company that we were in charge of today.....I certainly do thank God that it is over. I believe that I would sooner face the firing squad than go through much more of the same kind of treatment. But through it all my conviction is not changed, and I intend to stand for what I believe to be right. Pray for us that we may hold out faithful to the end.

Sincerely, ...

* * * *

Dear Brother ———:

I went to Camp Cody, N. Mex., Nov. 7, 1917. The sergeant asked me to go on guard duty. I refused, so he took me to the first lieutenant. The latter began to scold me, when the commanding officer took up my case. He asked me some questions apparently to test my mental capacity, then asked me why I refused. I explained that

it was contrary to my conscience. He ordered me to take the "billy" and walk my beat but should not dare to strike any one, and I obeyed....When we were fitted out with uniforms I was one of the first called, was taken outside and made to stand bare-headed for three hours on the side of a building against which the sun was beating intensely, while two hundred fifty men signed up. Then they took me and tried to scare me with all sorts of threatenings of punishment, imprisonments, etc. Finally they called up a sergeant at the stockade to come and get me. He soon came, and on the way to the stockade, he beat me with his club. The prisoners made sport of me, then giving me a mock court-martial trial. They put a rope around my neck and strung me up until I was almost unconscious. Here I believed that they would kill me, but they let me down and took me to the shower bath and turned cold water on me for about ten minutes until I was so numb that I could hardly help myself.

Later I was put to work, got into a heavy rain, and was refused dry clothes. I took cold which developed into influenza-pneumonia. Before I was released from the hospital help came through relatives writing to higher officials. Soon after leaving the hospital, arrangements were made for my release from camp, for which I was very thankful indeed.

.....

* * * *

Here is a letter from a young man who was willing to take noncombatant service:

.....1919.

Dear Brother ———:

I went to Camp Cody, N. Mex., June 25, 1918. At first I drilled without a rifle, but later was asked to take one, explaining that the President's orders concerning the C. O.'s required it, and I would get into noncombatant service in due time. I accepted it, and in two weeks was transferred to the infantry where, of course, I was asked again to take the rifle, and I saw that I had been deceived. I refused and explained why. Several nights after this, while I was in bed, some privates threw water into my bed, put a rope around my neck and jerked me out on the floor.

The next day two sergeants came to my tent and took me out, tied a gun on my shoulder and marched me down the street, one on each side of me, kicking me all the way. I was asked again whether I would take the rifle and drill. I refused and was taken to the bath-house, put under the shower bath where they turned on the water, alternating hot and cold, until I was so numb that I could

scarcely rise. Just then one of the higher officers came in and asked what they were about. They explained that they were giving me a bath. The officer told me to dress and go to my tent, that he wanted to interview me himself. He asked if I would take a rifle and drill. I told him that I could not. He ordered my sergeant to put me on company street work until they got my transfer, and in three weeks I was given noncombatant service.

Very truly Yours, ...

* * * *

Camp Greenleaf, Ga., November 9, 1918.

Dear Brother:

I want to let you know how things are going here. Thursday while I was eating dinner they took my suitcase and contents, and last evening after dark they came to my tent and took my clothes off except my underwear and kept them. The next morning I remained in bed. They came in and asked me whether I was sick. They took me out, set me onto a wheelbarrow and hauled me to the woods (forty rods or more) and back, and then to the supply house where they got a uniform for me. They told me to put it on. I said that I could not, so they took it and put it onto the wheelbarrow and told me to wheel it to my tent, which I did. I sat down on the bed in my underwear, and soon one of the men came in and put the uniform on me. I did not resist. I have it on now but it does not change me any. I am not discouraged, but am trusting in God who will care for me.

From your brother, ...

* * * *

.....1919.

I went to Camp Greenleaf, Ga., July 22, 1918. Was asked to sign up for service; I explained that I could not do that but would be willing to accept a furlough for farm work or for reconstruction work under the Friends. About fifteen of us were segregated and put to excessively hard labor in order to make us yield, and about once a day they would come around and ask whether we were ready to give up. Nearly half of them did finally. I worked a few days longer, and seeing what they were trying to do, I refused to work any longer. Sergeant ——— began to beat me, striking me with his fists and several times with a shovel. I told him that I would rather he would kill me than to use me up like that. He told the guard that he should not kill me as I was too anxious to die. They still beat me, finally offering me work that they claimed was entirely civilian. I accepted, provided that it was as they said.

We were kept at very hard labor for about three weeks until they saw the futility of it, and gradually made

our tasks easier until they were only ordinary and light. In the meantime they occasionally took us to headquarters and tried to get us to sign the pay-roll, soldier's insurance, etc. Finally I had to sign the pay-roll in order to get my discharge, but I returned the money to the war department. All told, it was rather a hard experience; but was profitable from a spiritual standpoint.

Respectfully, ...

* * * *

.....Feb. 8, 1919.

Dear Brother:

I came home Wednesday evening, Feb. 5. To get home, receive a hearty welcome and many expressions of joy for the effort made to maintain the faith, was alone worth the hardships which we endured.

I had been gone a few days more than ten months, of which I spent twenty-four days in our company, ten days in detention camp, seventy-eight days in the guard-house, one night in the Kansas City Police "lock-up," one hundred ninety-seven days in the disciplinary barracks (Fort Leavenworth, Kans.) and two days on the way home. Compare this with II Cor. 11:23-33, and one would almost consider that I had only been on a vacation....

I do not approve of such practices as the world was engaged in, and will give them neither moral nor material support though it may mean imprisonment or even death for not doing so. If the army would never kill a man, I can not see how a person could become a part of it, giving moral and material support to its maintenance and still retain a Christian character. The standards it upholds and the injustices it practices are unbelievable to a man who never saw them....The only part that I can have in the army is suffering its punishments. The manner and purposes of Christianity are as different as day and night. The aims of the army are coercion, terrorism, carnal force; the ideals of Christianity are love, meekness, gentleness, obedience to the will of God, etc. When these ideals are maintained to the best of our ability, by God's grace He will provide care and protection in ways not imagined by man.

As to noncombatant service; all branches of service have one purpose; viz., to make the whole system a stronger organization of terrorism, destruction, and death. While I would not have been directly killing any one, I would have been doing a man's part in helping another do the act, and lending encouragement to the same. To support a thing and refuse to do the thing supported is either ignorance or cowardice. To refuse to go to the trenches and still give individual assistance to another doing so, is either an improper knowledge of the issues at stake or

downright fear to face the bullets. I have a greater conscientious objection against noncombatant than against combatant service. I feel that the principle is the same, and that both are equally wrong. I would feel guilty toward the other man to accept service where the danger was not so great.....

To an observer it may have seemed ridiculous to refuse to even plant flowers at the base hospital. In the first place, that was the duty of the working gang under the quartermaster's department. Technically I would not have been doing military duty for I had not "signed up;" virtually I would have been rendering service because I was at work....The farther one went with the military officers the farther they demanded him to go. I felt that the farther I went the less reason I could give for stopping, so I concluded that the best place to stop was in the beginning. It was on the charge of refusing to plant flowers that I received my court-martial sentence of ten years of hard labor in the disciplinary barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kans.

Fraternally yours, ...

* * * *

U. S. Transport, New York, ——— 1919.

The military registration of June 5, 1917, included me, and I presented myself for registration, physical examination, and entrainment. The whole thing seemed vague and far away. On May 24, 1918, when I bade friends and relatives goodbye and boarded the troop train things became very real to me, the only conscientious objector among five hundred men so far as I knew.

We arrived at Camp Lewis, Wash., May 28, and were assigned to Depot Brigade and permanent kitchen work. I refused it and was sent to the guard-house. There I went through the most severe physical punishment at the hands of noncommissioned officers and guards that I ever experienced. I do not care to recount these abuses. Through the efforts of Bro. E. Z. Yoder of Hubbard, Oreg., conditions improved. I was in the guard-house forty days. Later I was sent to the Cascade Mountains on forest fire duty, and finally discharged December, 1918. I am glad for the lessons which I learned during my seven months of camp life, but hope I'll never be called upon to repeat them. I have realized the value of this truth: "The eternal God is thy refuge." I believe that I can truly say that if I had not been called to camp, I would not be on this U. S. transport, on the eve of our departure for Turkey to engage in relief work.

Yours truly, ...

.....April 19, 1919.

Dear Brother ———

I arrived at Camp McArthur, Texas, September 7, 1918. I refused to don the uniform, but they made a plea to send our clothing to Belgian sufferers, so I explained that I would be willing to have that suit sent, but that I would not wear the uniform. They said that I should put it on to go back to my tent and then I could change to my other civilian suit. This was simply a catch; I was not allowed to change. Many persistent efforts were made to get me to accept some kind of service. The sergeant threatened me, and according to his own words, would have knocked me down with a club if a higher officer would not have prevented him from doing so.

One officer asked me to accept work or get down and pray. I knelt and prayed especially for my persecutors, but was not allowed to finish. I was then taken to the stockade. The prisoners held a mock trial and sentenced me to "twenty-five tosses in the blanket and one hundred lashes with a leather strap." They immediately gave me the tosses and thirty-five lashes. They stopped to rest, gagged me, and proceeded to give me the remaining sixty-five lashes—this time using the buckle end on me. The same evening they held another trial, and this time sentenced me to five hundred lashes to be given the next evening.

While carying out this sentence they would stop occasionally and ask me whether I would work now. Receiving a negative answer each time, they began again until the whole sentence was carried out. Before the third evening the authorities had forbidden any more mock trials. After a stay of several days more I was asked by a lieutenant from headquarters whether I refused to wear the uniform and carry a gun, and on my refusal he sent me back to the tent and allowed me to put on my civilian clothes.

Refusing again to cut wood for the mess hall, the officer called the whole company together and told them that they could do anything with me that they pleased except that they dare not kill me. That night they organized and expected to have some fun with me. The officer in charge, fearing results, placed four guards over me. I was soon transferred to replacement camp. When ordered to do work which I could not conscientiously do, I was placed under another guard. He picked up a stick and began to beat me. I was told that I dare not speak to any one and no one was allowed to speak to me; that I was to go to mess at the rear end of the line and have short rations.

On October 2, I was taken to the base hospital very sick with influenza, and was there three weeks. Some

time after I was out again they tried once more to compel me to take service. For my refusal I was placed into solitary confinement and on a "bread and water" diet for twelve days. It was very rainy at that time and the roof leaked. My five by ten foot cell was very damp and I was cold day and night. They took my Bible away from me, but I had a small Testament which they did not find. I read much of the time in that.

Had a court-martial trial November 26, and was sentenced to five years imprisonment at Fort Leavenworth, Kans., but was released January 7, 1919, thanking God for my experience but hoping that there would never be conditions again in this, or any other country, which would make it necessary for me or any one else to experience such things in the future. I am,

Your brother, ...

* * * *

.....June 3, 1919.

Dear Brother:

I was inducted into the army about March 5, 1918, and was first sent to Camp Greenleaf, Ga., where I remained more than five months and, of course, had some very hard trials. The officers tried to make me work as a soldier, and when I refused to work under the military establishment they threatened to shoot me, to hang me, etc.; but after hearing my reasons for not working, some of the officers were very kind while others did not want to see it that way.

I was transferred to many different companies, and on June 15, I was placed into the guard-house where I remained until August 8. Then I was transferred to Camp Meade, Md., under the guard of a military police. Here I was placed into the stockade where I was tried like gold in the fire. I was put into the sweat-box from dinner until supper and then beaten so that I felt the effects for more than a week. During all this time came the loving words of our Lord, "My grace is sufficient for thee." I tried to have them understand that if our Father would give me the strength I would not flinch even if I had to suffer. Later I was transferred to the C. O. barracks, and about five weeks later received a farm furlough to work for a farmer in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania. I was here three and a half months, then called back to Camp Meade for discharge from the army.

Yours truly, ...

* * * *

.....Apr. 23, 1919.

Dear Brother:

I arrived at Camp Greeleaf, Ga., September 8, 1918. The night previous was spent on the train and was a new

experience to me. Wickedness was rampant and the expressions were vile indeed, the worst that I ever heard. Once in camp we were placed in tents. I soon explained my position to several of the officers, stating that I could not drill nor even work under the military establishment. One of them said, "Man, you will be proud of yourself." The two hundred fifty men in our company soon knew me, and in passing their tents I would hear shouts of "Shoot him," "Hang him," "Give us a sermon," "Come in and pray for us," "He won't fight," "He is yellow," and many other unpleasant statements.

As the company stood in lines for mess, some one would give the signal that the "preacher" was there and then all would hurl some uncomfortable expressions at me. Rather than suffer this I missed many meals. Numerous officers tried to get me to see things from their point of view. I explained my position, but much as I longed for sympathy I got none. While waiting in the examination hall one day, half a dozen lieutenants asked me a great many questions. They praised me for being "so bright," but could not understand how one having such a "sound mind" could take such a position. One of them who pretended to be a Quaker, said, "One time I believed much as you do, but I know better now."

I was asked to don the uniform, and on refusing they put it on me and sent my clothes home. I was asked again to drill but refused. Two men pulled me out of my tent and held me in the ranks trying to make me keep step. They tramped my toes and kicked me. This treatment was kept up for about two weeks, but finding it of no avail they let me go. Scoldings and cursings were frequent. I was asked to help carry out several men on stretchers who were sick with influenza. I did so, but the Lord preserved me so that I did not get it.

One day a sergeant took me to the bath house and tried to compel me to accept some kind of service. He slapped me in the face, struck me repeatedly with his fists, and would catch me so that I would not fall. He would wring my nose, pull my hair, and strike my head against the wall. He kept up this treatment for some time but when he saw that I would neither defend myself nor yield to accepting service he let me go. I had a black eye and a swollen face for a week or more.

Later I was placed with the other C. O.'s and in about four weeks from that time the armistice was signed. A little later I was transferred to Camp Sherman (O.) and soon discharged. I learned many valuable lessons in camp which are helpful to my religious experience, but I am perfectly willing to have no more trials of the same kind

if that is satisfactory to my Lord. Praise Him for His keeping and protection.

Your brother, ...

Mock court-martial trials were not all held by prisoners. Even soldiers who were not prisoners and officers were sometimes guilty. In one camp in the central west several young men were placed with other C. O.'s who had been in camp longer or were segregated from the other soldiers. One of their number was sick and in the hospital when the transfer was made. When he got out again, he asked for an interview with the captain, which was refused. Two days later he was called, when the following conversation took place:

Captain. "Some of the boys have accepted the uniform and work. I have made them first class privates, I'll make you a sergeant. Will you accept?"

C. O. "No, sir."

Captain. "You are up for a discharge, but I'll not sign it unless you put on the uniform and accept work."

C. O. "I think more of my religion than of such a discharge."

Captain. "You are very foolish. All we can do is to put you into the guard-house and await further orders."

The man was put into the guard-house for two days on a bread and water diet, then let out. One night at 10:30 he was called and asked whether he was willing to accept service, which he refused.

Captain. "Here is an order with Secretary Baker's name attached, 'All C. O.'s hereafter shall be tried and punished as the court-martial may direct.' "

The young man was asked whether he knew

what this meant. He answered in the affirmative, but stated that he was willing to take the consequences, still believing it to be a "bluff."

Captain. "You know, army orders change, and you may get your witnesses."

C. O. "I do not want any witnesses. I am not here for any criminal offense."

At 4:30, the next morning he was called and asked whether he had sent for his witnesses. On receiving a negative answer, the officer ordered a court-martial which was held. A major with tears (?) in his eyes read, "The prisoner is guilty of violating the ninety-sixth article of war, and the decision of the jury is,—death." He was hand-cuffed, taken to the brow of a hill by one lieutenant, one sergeant, and four soldiers.

Sergeant. "Show this man your loaded guns."

This was done and six bright cartridges came in sight.

Sergeant. "They are all red hot and made to kill."

Lieut. "Have you anything to say?"

C. O. "Nothing."

Lieut. "You have fifteen minutes to live.—ten —five—three. Time is up, ready, aim, fire," but no shot was fired. After a silence of several minutes which seemed like hours, the lieutenant said, "We've decided to let you go until morning. We do not want to kill you." In the morning he was called before the officer again.

Captain. "Have you thought over this matter?"

C. O. "Yes, I certainly have; you would too if you had been in my place."

Captain. "Good, What is your decision?"

C. O. "Still the same as before, God helping me."

Captain. "All right, take him to the division guard-house."

The C. O. was then taken in the captain's car and landed at the C. O. barracks—the happiest man in the lot. You say, "O, that was simply a mock trial." True, but the young man did not know it. To him it was real.

While the experiences given here were all those of brethren of the main branch of Mennonites, others from other branches and even other denominations had experiences equally severe, and some of them being conscientious to the extent that they would not even keep their living places clean, were made to suffer cruel tortures. Possibly none of the Mennonite branches suffered more severely than the Hutterites. They will be referred to in a later chapter.

From these letters several things are evident:

First, that while some of the officers were very cruel and acted in very bad faith, they were not all so, as some officers gave respectful consideration to those who because of religious convictions could have no part in the military machine.

Second, that the officers in a great many cases had no regard for truth; that no matter how great the deception, they had no convictions against using it if it served their purpose of "putting the young man across."

Third, that no difference how the objector was caused to make a statement, and regardless of the disadvantage to the young man when the truth became known, he was expected to make his word

good, and if he did not, he was charged with insincerity.

Fourth, that as much as possible the tests were made individually, because it was easier to get one to yield when alone than when several were together.

Fifth, that the officers in many cases delighted in the abuses which were heaped upon the C. O. rather than to try to prevent such injustices, even though the latter was their plain duty.

Sixth, that so little did some of the officers know about true Christian conviction that they supposed it could be broken, just as stubbornness could in the obdurate, not realizing that when one had been made to go against religious convictions and better knowledge, a most serious damage had been done to character—more serious than killing a man who remains true to his God and his conscience.

Seventh, that a willingness to accept noncombatant service as provided for by Government did not always prevent cruel treatment from those in authority.

Eighth, that hard as some of these things were to bear, they led many of the young men to higher standards of spiritual life, at least for the time being—and how sad it would be if that spirituality should be lowered by pride in their accomplishments. May God protect these young men and keep them humble, so that they may be useful as well—and may His grace be extended to those who failed to stand the test. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

CHAPTER XI

THE DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS

There are three disciplinary camps in the United States. They serve the same purpose for the soldier who receives a prison sentence as the Federal prison does for the civil transgressor. There is scarcely a time when there are no military prisoners, and during a war there are naturally many more than in times of peace.

One of these camps is on Governor's Island, N. Y., another on Alcatraz Island, Calif., and the remaining one is at Fort Leavenworth, Kans. Because of the bitter complaints regarding the treatment received by the prisoners at one of the other camps, all conscientious objectors at the other two places were transferred to the last named place, hence our account will apply only to Fort Leavenworth and the prisoners there.

Size

Something of the size of the barracks may be grasped when we hear them speak in terms like the following: "The sixth wing;" "There are five hundred prisoners in this wing;" "There are more than three thousand prisoners in these barracks;" "About eighteen hundred of us ate in the mess hall at one time;" etc.

"Going to Leavenworth"

After the court-martial sentence had been passed the party was considered a criminal. On the way from camp to the disciplinary barracks, or from one of these prisons to another, at first there was no difference shown in favor of those who were sentenced because of a religious conviction against war and the greatest desperado. They were hand-cuffed, and in some cases hands and feet were manacled at night. Some of those who were taken there later were not even hand-cuffed. Those who were taken to Fort Leavenworth from the east were kept in the Kansas City police "lock-up," provided a continued journey would bring them to their destination late at night. Several of the Camp Taylor C. O.'s spent one night there. Imagine the walls of that building re-echoing as the boys sang from memory such songs as "Faith of our fathers," and "O my soul, bless thou Jehovah." It must have given the police a new sensation.

On Arrival

Once inside the large iron gates, and they securely barred, with guards standing around all well armed, the hand-cuffs were removed. It was necessary for the prisoner to register, to give the name and address of his nearest relative, and receive a number; for hereafter he is hardly considered worthy of a name but is known entirely by number. All this was done in the office just inside the gate. Here he gave up all his belongings, even down to comb, handkerchief, and toothpicks.

Getting Prison Clothes

The prisoner was then taken to the store room

where he removed every bit of clothing and placed it on a pile, then went to the next attendant who fitted him out with prison clothes. Some of these clothes had been worn by former prisoners but were thoroughly sterilized before being given out again. The clothes were of the plainest possible cut, only one pocket being allowed in the trousers in which the regulation blue handkerchief was carried. Occasionally a shirt or a jacket had a pocket, but they were not supposed to have. But why should a prisoner have other pockets? He was not supposed to carry anything else.

The Prisoner's Probation

The prisoner was next taken to the basement of the fourth wing for confinement, this being the only lock-cell-wing in the prison. If he showed signs of reform (Imagine how this applied to some of the most consecrated young men in the Church) he would soon be allowed more privileges, but for the time being he was kept at work under guard constantly while not at mess or in his cell. Very soon his "nearest relative" received some blanks to be filled out, asking such questions as: "How often has the prisoner been arrested and for what?" "Is he accustomed to getting drunk?" "Are any of his ancestors habitual intoxicants?" and a number of other questions just as inapplicable to people of this class. But it should be remembered that in order to keep peace among so many there must needs be uniformity of treatment and questions. If the report was favorable and the prisoner was well behaved he was given a "star parole" and was allowed to work on the dairy, poultry, or hog farm. If it became evident

that the prisoner was safe to put among other prisoners, he was soon put into another wing where the cells were open and the prisoners were allowed to commingle. This was not always an advantage. A quotation from a political objector will show very clearly that he did not consider it so. He says: "Communication from one floor to another is open. This leaves about eighty men free to roam around the section at night, for all sorts of devilry. As there are many who have bad records in civil life you will not be surprised at the conditions which obtain here, where I have to sleep and spend my extra time. Dope fiends, auto thieves, burglars, and ....are quite common. They are very nice to the C. O.'s, and will do anything for us, but just living with them is dangerous enough. Their filthy language and dirty stories from the lowest underworld are enough to drive a man crazy. One can not read or think because of the constant stream of filth." Another writes, "I feel that a few years of this kind of confinement would make a mental or a physical wreck of the best kind of a man. We can not be too deeply concerned about those who are still there." The jeopardy is increased by the fact that some of the most loathsome and contagious diseases are found in these men which endangers the health of the prisoners.

Prison Precautions

These prisoners were expected to work, and for the first few days they were assigned to work within the compound in order that they might be near when wanted at the office, for they were not yet ready to be turned to work in the fields with the "gang."

Every precaution was used so that in case a prisoner got away he might be caught again. Their finger prints were taken, their number placed on the front of each trouser leg, on the back of their shirts, coats, and raincoats. A card with the number on it was placed under the chin and a photograph taken. The picture with all the information regarding the prisoners was taken to the Rogue's Gallery in the Federal prison. With these precautions, his prison clothes only, and the many guards, little hopes could be had of escaping and not being found.

Prisoner's Rights

From that time the prisoner's rights were few. If he made complaint of ill treatment the under officers usually gave some answer of contempt, such as, "If you had behaved you would not be here," or, "All that is the matter with you is that you are out of luck." Patients in the hospital were given similar answers. All these could be borne by the religious objectors, but for people who were resentful—and many of the prisoners were—these things bred intense hatred toward the officials; and what is a great deal worse, against the government, for there is where the blame ultimately lands.

Psychopathic-Psychologic Board

This board was expected to make a close study of the individual character of all prisoners and decide on the possibility of a reformation. The members of the board asked a number of questions of which the following is a partial list: "Were your parents ever insane?" "Have you any relatives in the penitentiary?" "Have you any relatives in the poor-house?" "Were your parents ever alcoholics?"

"Did they use other drugs, opium, morphine, etc.?" "How many times were you arrested before?" "What other names have you used at various times in your life?" "What is your naval or military experience?" "How many court-martial trials have you had?" "What were your employments in civil life?" "Were you ever discharged?" "Why?" "Are you married?" "Do you want to live with your wife?" "Does she want to live with you?" "How long did you go to school?" "Were you ever expelled?" "Why did you quit?" "Do you think that your court-martial was fair?" "Do you admit your guilt?" "Are you sorry for what you did?" "Do you want to be restored to duty and be a good soldier?" Imagine how these questions would apply to some of the noble Christian young men, at least one of whom was an ordained minister in the Mennonite Church, or to some who had their A. B. degrees from college and were leaders in Christian work in their home congregations. But here again it must be remembered that the tests would be much the same to all, as one of the best means of keeping the unruly quiet; again, that the principle to which these nonresistant young men held was not understood by the examiners any more than it was by the officials or the soldiers in the army.

The classification of the religious objectors according to "rule and rote of the army officer" was not an easy job. Here is one case: A member of the examining board thought that all men could be classified on their past records and their education. He called a certain Mennonite into his room. The officer gave him a mere glance but looked closely at some papers before him and said, "You have finished a

college course and have done some post graduate work. You have held a good position in an institution of higher learning;" then without lifting his eyes from the paper he said, "What business do you have to be a C. O." The brother made no reply. The officer said, "Eh?" Again no reply because the officer had been profane in his questioning and he waited for a respectable question. After a long silence the officer said, "What do you mean by classifying yourself with this ignorant, dull, and illiterate crowd?"

The C. O. "Sir, I think your characterization is quite inaccurate. The C. O.'s compare quite favorable with the average soldier." (Here the C. O. intended to refer the officer to the psychological test at Camp Taylor, where the C. O. company made a record twenty per cent higher than the next best company in the camp, but the officer cut him short.)

Officer. "We have the figures and know what we are talking about. It is not so queer that such illiterate fellows should have such narrow-minded views about war, but here you are—been going to school for many years, at good schools too, where I am sure they would not teach any such notions.... and you have been teaching. Haven't you been able to get away from such narrow, petty notions about religion?"

C. O. "No sir, I do not allow myself to be swayed by the opinions of others unless I am convinced. I never agreed with the majority."

Officer. (Disgustingly) "O you never agreed with anything."

C. O. "I say I never agreed with the majority on a number of moral questions. I never approved

the use of tobacco or liquors, and even while in school I was opposed to joining college fraternities, going to dances, playing cards, etc.—" but the officer had gotten more information already than he wanted and dismissed his party.

These experiences are given at some length to show the methods used by officials, and to show that the C. O. could not be placed into any of their outlined classes. He was a puzzle in camp, and no less so here.

Shall he Work?

As stated, these men were expected to work. They had refused to work in camp; shall they work here? Each one solved that question for himself. A few from some of the smaller branches of Mennonites refused to work and suffered the consequences which as a rule were, "the solitary." But why should they work here and not in camp? Most of them decided this question on the following basis: They were no longer considered as soldiers, for in their court-martial they were dishonorably discharged from the army (Being a part of the army was one of their principal objections to working in camp); the work was not military, and did not produce military products more than any other farm; it was not furnishing any money for the support of the war, for it was reported as not self-supporting. A number of the C. O.'s went there with a full determination not to do military work even under prison discipline, but on investigation believed that they could work here without violating any Gospel principle.

Gang Work

After the first few days the prisoners were sent out in gangs of possibly five under a guard who was well armed to work on the farm during the day, to be brought in for their meals and for the night. The guard was held responsible for any one who got away; hence he wanted them constantly in sight and did not want more than the proverbial five. One of these guards was given charge of ten men, all of whom were C. O.'s, and complained to the officer over him that it was dangerous and unjust to be held responsible for so many. He was very nervous for a while, but soon became more and more confident, and in time permitted his men to go about their work without making any effort to keep them in his sight. In a gang of forty or more men which in time was composed entirely of C. O.'s the guards were reduced gradually until there was only one, and he slept much of the time. The boys proved that they could be trusted. In fact, the officers believed these young men more than they believed each other. The overseer of one of these farms was quite enthusiastic about making his farm a success, and became discouraged when he heard that the C. O.'s were to be discharged and that he must again depend on criminal labor. He could not trust the latter class and did not expect the amount nor the quality of work which he had been getting.

Star Parole

Most of the Mennonite boys received star paroles after they had worked with the gangs for a time. They were not kept under guard after that, but were assigned some certain work for which they

were held responsible. They must report regularly, but their work was so far away from the barracks that frequently they would not get back more than once a week. Some of them slept in a barn near where their work was.

Room-mates

After a murder had been committed the C. O.'s were scattered promiscuously among the other prisoners. In cells occupied by six men, anywhere from one to four may have been C. O.'s. No one had any choice as to who his room-mate should be. Thus the vilest and the best in the prison might easily have been required to live in the same cell. This was a trial. Think of these young men, clean in habit and language, being placed with those having loathsome diseases, and who were vile in body and mind, and who had very little regard for human life. With all this these wicked men respected the Christians for trying to live clean lives in such a vile place. One of the C. O.'s said, "The prisoners would do anything for us." This does not correspond with the Kansas City papers some time in December, 1918, when they stated that the C. O.'s were a real problem for the prison administration to handle; that they were hated in the army and by the prisoners at Leavenworth; that the latter were constantly finding ways to show their contempt toward the poor, deluded boys; that it had been necessary to segregate the C. O.'s to avoid clashes between them and the other prisoners; that the C. O.'s were responsible for fights, riots, and strikes. One young man said, "I was at Fort Leavenworth during two of the disturbances, and am in a position to say that

no religious C. O. was connected with either; and I am very confident that none were involved in anything like that after I left." The same in substance has come to us direct from a half dozen other young men who had been prisoners there. But if the officials believed the C. O.'s more than they did each other, there seems to be no reason why we should not do likewise.

Meals

The meals were fair in quantity, but not always in quality. They followed a regular routine. That is to say, the menu for Monday noon was the same each Monday noon except when that chanced to be a holiday and so with all the other meals. The prisoners always knew what to expect. At regular intervals all new-comers were seized with griping pains in the bowels for which the food was blamed, but in course of time they seemed to become immune to these disorders.

Overcrowded Conditions

It is not easy to realize the difficulties experienced by "the full house." There was room for eighteen hundred when the prison was all in use. Commander Rice received word to prepare to take care of five thousand, but how was he to do this? Everything was arranged and equipped for about one-third that many. Beds could be placed in the corridors, but that was not desirable. Arrangements could be made to eat at different hours so that the same dining hall could accommodate twice as many as could get to the tables at once, but that would be a source of dissatisfaction—but what with regard to the hospitals? This increase in numbers at the

prison would tax that department to its utmost. Then came the influenza. An effort to describe is useless. No wonder that some of the prisoners did all in their power to keep out of that place, and some suffered severely simply because they did not report actual conditions. This crowded condition also meant that patients could not always have the care that they should have had.

The Solitary

This was the most dreaded place in all the disciplinary barracks of the nation. At Alcatraz this was possibly thirty feet below the surface of the earth. At Fort Leavenworth it was not so deep but was deep enough to be quite dark. When some one refused to obey orders he was likely to be sentenced to the solitary. Here they were put on a bread and water ration for two weeks then on full rations for another two weeks and so on. This was done with a view of breaking the will of the supposed culprit. Young men from several of the smaller branches of Mennonites who refused to work because they had conscientious scruples against aiding anything that was connected with the military establishment were sentenced to the "hole," as the solitary was commonly called. Possibly the most cruelly treated were the four Hutterites—Jacob Wipf, David, Michael and Joseph Hofer. They spent four and a half days in the Alcatraz solitary without any food and only a a half glass of water every twenty-four hours. At night they slept on the cold, damp concrete floor without any blankets, and during the day, with their hands through the bars of the prison so high that they could stand on the floor with difficulty, the

hand-cuffs were fastened on and they were required to stand there for nine hours each day. In course of time these four men were transferred to Fort Leavenworth. Being required to wait for some time after reaching the prison, and being sweated on their arrival, two of them (Michael and Joseph) took a severe cold which developed into pneumonia and both died in the hospital. The father, the two widows of the dead men, David Hofer and Jacob Wipf remain to tell the story. The two wives and the father hurried to the scene as soon as they found out that they were sick. Sorrow fills their hearts, but it is the sorrow of pity and forgiveness. No words of bitterness, no spirit of hatred is heard or seen. Rather the prayer of the Master is manifest, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The Attitude at Washington

From the beginning it was evident that the government at Washington was inclined to be lenient toward those who had received a court-martial sentence because of religious scruples, and quite a number had been released from the disciplinary barracks. Finally the board of inquiry came to Fort Leavenworth and examined the C. O.'s with a view of finding out those who were sincere. Those who had united with a nonresistant church before this country entered into the war, and were able to convince the board that they believed the doctrines of their church were asked but very few questions. Those who were not so clear, or had united with the Church only a short time before going to camp, were examined quite carefully. It is generally con-

ceded that the board wanted to be fair. As a result of this examination, one hundred thirteen were given their discharge in one day. The public was not prepared for such a wholesale release, newspapers criticised the war department very severely, and one of the legislatures in a western state passed a resolution showing its disapproval and disgust. As a result releases were not so general after that, but so far as known at this writing every Mennonite has been released. Another kindness of the department was that the religious conscientious objectors received the middle discharge rather than the lowest or dishonorable discharge, as required by the court martial sentence.

A Retrospect

Many of the experiences of the C. O.'s were very trying, but praise God for the courage which was manifested. A little compromise in camp might have lessened their trials and have kept them from the disciplinary barracks, but it was a case of "Choosing rather to suffer affliction....than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." As a rule, the record of the brethren was good, both in camp and in prison, and it was very evident that they made their influence felt, both with the officials and with the prisoners by proving that the religion of Jesus Christ could be lived as well as professed; under adverse circumstances as well as in the home and the Church. A great blessing came to many at that time and has ever since been a means of strength to them, while others who suffered equally severe trials and stood bravely for the right were blest as much as their brethren, only to lose it afterwards, and all because

they could not stand the praise of men. They preached to others by their actions but have since shown a spirit different from the lowly Nazarene and their influence which they might have continued to exercise, is gone. We praise God that this does not apply to the majority, and we pray that it never will.

CHAPTER XII

HOME EXPERIENCES WHICH GREW OUT OF WAR MEASURES

False Patriotism

Many trials were caused by the war, not the least of which were suffered at the hands of people who did their nefarious work under the name of patriotism, not realizing that instead of working for and with the government they were hindering it and actually aiding the enemy. Besides, mob rule never accomplishes permanent good. The very purpose of a mob is to perform some unlawful act and as a rule is made up in part of the worst elements in the community. Men are not normal at such times and one never knows what to expect.

President Wilson asked the people of this country to refrain from all mob violence, but in spite of the request during the drives for the Y. M. C. A., Red Cross, Liberty Bonds, etc., mobs were quite frequent. At first private homes, business places, and church buildings were daubed with yellow paint. Such expressions as, "Slacker," "You love the Kaiser," "You are stingy," and other things of a worse character were written on the doors and windows. Like other cowardly acts, these things were usually done at night.

These acts were intended to anger, to cause some unbecoming remarks, and immediate action to

remove the paint. In most cases where it was put on church buildings it was simply left. One church thus daubed had a large Sunday school conference in it which brought all classes of people to the meeting. The paint was still on. Public sentiment branded it as a disgrace to the community, and the paint became a reprimand to those who put it there.

Several brethren in Jasper County, Mo., received yellow slips of paper with the following printed on them:

"FIRST AND LAST WARNING

You have been reported to the ALL AMERICAN SQUAD as a person who has failed in your obligation.

YOUR COUNTRY IS AT WAR!

This committee does not tolerate SLACKERS. Do your full duty to your country NOW! Or get out of Jasper County or suffer the consequences.

ALL AMERICAN COMMITTEE STRONG ARM SQUAD"

It would have been more in keeping with the spirit manifested in the paper, as well as the way they were sent out to have used the word "mob" instead of squad.

As the feeling became more intense, mobs were more frequent and more violent. It is sad to know that some of our brethren who plead conscientious scruples against the support of war measures, when they were facing the mob supplied with tar and feathers or a rope, or both, they yielded to buying war papers or donating to some war charity. In some cases they claimed that they yielded because some of the other members of the family plead so hard, but whatever the cause, they yielded to that which they felt was wrong, or they were not true in making the claim of conscientiousness against it. An opportunity was lost, but let us cover it all with

the mantle of charity. Both the perpetrators of the deeds and those who yielded need our sympathy. At the same time let us look closely to the admonition of Paul, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

A few experiences are given herewith. They are taken from widely different localities and show the different methods used. No one claims perfection for the sufferers nor are these things recorded here to hold them up as objects of glory and virtue. You may see some weakness in their actions, but in most cases decisions had to be made quickly and under very unfavorable circumstances. Two things should be considered: First, one is not quite sure what he will do under pressure, hence the need of being thoroughly grounded in Christ Jesus so that character is so deeply rooted that only the right thing will be done even if there is no time for careful, premeditated decision; Second, in many cases at least some of these perpetrators are known. Many of them have had time to consider their actions and are now thoroughly ashamed of them—and surely they should be ashamed—but the highest good will be attained by showing that there is absolutely no ill feeling harbored but that all persecutors have been fully forgiven. The following speak for themselves:

..... Feb. 24, 1919.

Dear Brother M——

I was asked several times during the liberty loan campaign to buy bonds....I gave the same reasons for refusing to buy in every interview—that I could not possibly loan money to carry on war any more than I could give my boy or go myself.

The next to the last day of the fourth drive, five or six men came to our home and when the girls told them

that I was not at home they seemed very angry. They left papers and said that I must sign them and send them that day so they would get them in the morning. I ignored them, and on Saturday we thought that we were through the trial for this time; but about seven o'clock in the evening three automobiles came, and four men came to the door. When my wife opened it they bolted in, and one of the men began to use abusive language and to say that I had refused just as long as I could, that the time had come when I must. I tried to reason but got little chance to have a say until I flatly refused. Several shots were then fired outside, and one of the men went to the door and called, "Come on, George." Then two or three others and "George" came in. He threw off his overcoat, laid his revolver on a chair and shouted and stormed like a mad man, calling me all the abusive names that came to his mind, such as, "liar," "thief," "slacker," "pro-German," "income-tax-dodger," "dirty dog," etc.

Among them was one who claimed to be an officer from Washington, sent to see whether these men did their work right, and he sat down beside my wife urging her to try to persuade me to buy, as there was no telling what they will do, for they were making all kinds of threats—to tar and feather me, take me to jail, drive away my cattle, burn my barn, and compel my boy to take up military service, etc.

The officer pretended to check them at times but they told him to keep quiet till they were through, then he should have his say. When his turn came he asked us to go into another room where he began to "taffy" us and said that I should sign up this note for five thousand dollars, and that I might write across the end of the note, "To be used for Belgian relief work," and promised that it would be used for that. I decided to do that since it was to be used for relief. After that they treated me fine. They deplored the necessity of doing such work, but said that it must be done or Germany would come over here and destroy our property, take our men, drive out our women and children. We told them that was just what they threatened to do, and asked where the difference was. They claimed to be hungry. My wife told them that our Bible teaches us to feed our enemies, and that if they would wait she would get supper for them. But they refused.

Your brother, ...

* * * *

..... June 3, 1919.

Dear Brother, Greeting:

After the bond drives became quite insistent I received some threatening notices that unless I supported all

these war measures I would suffer for it. I always gave Gospel reasons for not doing so, but showed that I gave freely to war sufferers through our own Church channels and through the Friends.

About the middle of April, 1918, I was called by telephone by a government officer at Kansas City, demanding my reasons for not supporting war measures. I gave him the same reply that I did the others. On April 22, a flag was nailed to our church, and that night about two o'clock, possibly fifty masked men drove into the yard of my former home, then occupied by my son, C——. The mob called him out of bed and asked where I lived and several questions about the flag. Then they compelled him to remove his underwear and smeared him over with tar after which they applied the feathers.

They next went to the church and daubed the door and steps with tar, after which they came to my house and called me to the door. Two men grabbed me and pulled me out. They demanded that I buy bonds and support the Red Cross and other war measures. I replied that I could not conscientiously do that but would give to war sufferers through channels not under military control. I was then tarred and feathered and left with threats of a repetition if I did not support war measures.

On the night of June 3, a second mob of thirty-five or forty came to my home, called me out and threatened to pound me to pieces, using most abusive and ungodly language. They demanded that I sign a check at once for tht Red Cross. Because of the condition of my wife, who was nearly prostrated, and who at this writing is still suffering from the shock, I signed a check for fifty dollars for the Red Cross, but stopped payment on it in the morning. The next day, in company with one of our bishops, I met our banker and the county officials of the drive, and they agreed to accept a check for the Friends Reconstruction Service. I gave them a check for seventy-five dollars. I thought that this would settle the matter; but on the night of June 10, another masked mob of about twenty-five came to my home and called me out. They said that they would daub my entire premises with "dope" if I did not promise to support war measures. On my refusal they ransacked the house from cellar to garret. They took my watch and what money they found. They daubed my new house with yellow paint, inside and out, and did the same to the automobile. They tore off my underwear, struck me a dozen times or more with a large strap, bruising my flesh and cutting the skin open. I was dragged to the barn and abused, after which they applied carboline roofing paint to my body followed by feathers. The carbolic acid in the paint made me very sore, and my body,

face, and hands were badly swollen. I was left with the threat that they would hang me the next time.

The men then went to the home of my son, C———, and used him in a similar manner, ransacking the house, daubing it and the automobile with yellow paint, and applying carboline and feathers to his body.

Yours in His service, ...

* * * *

..... April 24, 1919.

Dear Brother ———, Greeting:

A very unfortunate thing occurred in our community between an over enthusiastic patriotic school teacher and some pupils with reference to saluting the flag. This created considerable prejudice which spread from school to school....When the different drives came on we were watched very closely, especially leaders. Newspapers misrepresented our position. I was visited only a few times by solicitors and usually when my position was stated it was accepted and respected, but one came who held a prominent position, and he would not be convinced; failing in his undertakings, determined to get even some way. He created still more envy and hatred.

We endeavored to do our part by giving liberally for relief work through our own channels. When the fourth liberty loan drive came, we took bank certificates in lieu of bonds in an amount equal to our supposed share of the third and fourth loans. After the signing of the armistice another drive was made, and on November 15 a solicitor came to my home. I wrote him a check for ten dollars and filled out my card, designating that my money should be used for the support of the Salvation Army work. That night about nine o'clock a mob came, consisting of forty or fifty men, unmasked, crowded around the door and rapped. I opened the door wide. The leader admitted that I had given to the cause but claimed it was not enough, and demanded a check for one hundred dollars. I tried to reason with them and showed that I had done more than my share. They began to hiss and gnash at me, took hold of me and pulled me out into the yard. With the crowd and a part of my family around me the conversation continued. I was accused of influencing people, going to camps and encouraging the boys not to wear the uniform, and they called me Kaiser. I was given one more chance to sign up or suffer the consequences. I flatly refused, stated my position, and said that if they wanted my life they could have it; but that I would give nothing to a crowd like that, quoting a number of scriptures and referring to the President's message, but to no avail.

They pulled me away from my wife and daughter who

had hold of me and took me across the road where horse clippers were applied to my head, taking everything clean. My life and buildings were threatened. They claimed to have lots of work and must make haste, so they went to their machines and the entire crowd went east, stopping at two other places before disbanding.

A number of young people were at our home, learning some new songs, and when they saw what was going on they held a prayer service before leaving the room; but one of the young sisters present was obliged to take treatment for four months because of the shock upon her nervous system. We praise God for still caring for His own.

Fraternally, ...

* * * *

..... April 18, 1919.

Dear Brother, Greeting:

I was solicited for the various war measures, but usually an explanation of my position was all that was necessary. I made a bank deposit in lieu of buying liberty bonds in the fourth drive. When the war-chest-drive was on an organization was formed with the motto, "Every man a subscriber." Two men came to my home one evening the latter part of July, 1918, called me out and asked me to go with them to the county seat. I told them that I could not go because my wife's mother was very sick, and that I must help her and the children to get to her bedside; but they showed me the silver star on their vests, claiming to be United States deputies, and said, "You must go."

They went to the home of my brother-in-law and got him. Other automobiles joined in. On the way back past my home they asked me to take my machine. We did so, and with two others in my machine we proceeded to the county seat.

On reaching the city we were ordered to leave my machine near the police station and get into their machine. They took us through a dark alley and into a large hall where from six to eight hundred men were assembled. All except a few in the back part of the hall were masked. I was to answer questions only.

I was questioned as to why I could not sign up for this fund. When I explained that I thought it was wrong to support war measures, they asked me whether I did not sell produce at war prices and said that I could not hide behind the cloak of religion. They had no respect for my convictions and decided that I must sign up for a specific amount. Some said one thousand dollars but finally agreed on fifty dollars. I told them that I had some money along and that they might take that, but they said that they wanted my voluntary signature. I refused. The

card was made out and I was given one minute to sign it. The chairman, also masked, held his watch in one hand and his pen extended toward me in the other, but when they found that availed nothing I was ordered to go back to the machine, followed by many epitaphs too vile to put on paper. Kicks and cuffs were in evidence. After I was out my brother-in-law was taken into the hall.... He yielded, and that made them more fierce toward me.... Finally we were taken back to our machine and allowed to go home.

On August 14, near midnight,.... A man wanted some oil. I got up and got it for him. Then he wanted me to hold the lantern while he poured the oil into his machine. He and several others caught hold of me, put me into the machine. I had very little clothing on and was barefooted. They went about a mile to a woods and asked each other whether this would not be a good place to string me up. After a time they drove very fast. I got very cold and asked for some extra clothing. They answered me by putting me under their feet while they drove wildly on. When they stopped, about seven miles away from my home, they placed a rope around my neck and led me to the side of the road. They asked whether I wanted to pray before being hung. I knelt down and prayed. References were made to the war-chest but they intimated that it was too late now. They asked me whether I was sorry that I had not signed before. I said that I could not do it even now.... They took off my shirt and painted the upper part of my body. They clipped from the front to the back of my head, and from ear to ear, the strip being about an inch and a half wide. They cut so close that in several places they took off the skin. Then they put on my shirt and took off the rope, and told me to make tracks toward home. About half a mile from the scene I inquired the way home.... After going about a mile farther I inquired the way to my cousin..... I awoke him, told him the whole story. He gave me clothes and took me to my home.

We praise God for His protection, and for permitting us to meet again as a family after such a siege.

Your brother, ...

It is the duty of every Christian to give due regard to government and its officials, never to speak evil of them, but to pray for them that they may be directed of God so that His people may live in the land to His glory. It is the aim of government to

give freedom of speech; but there are always those who would abuse such privileges, hence there is need of some restrictions. This is especially true in times of war, as both pulpit and press would be used to aid the enemy if it were not for the law. It was with this in mind that the Espionage law was passed and later amended.

It was not the intent of this law, however, that every effort should be made to watch for any slight expression that some one would make in an unguarded moment in the regular discharge of his duty, and then prosecute the case for vengeance. That this was done in some cases goes without saying. Instances where the party had not the least idea of violating any law nor of hindering the President in the prosecution of his work and least of all of aiding the enemy, were made the victims of the law.

An effort was made to indict those who signed the statement put out by the Mennonite General Conference. (See chapter V.) Federal representatives visited many of the signers. Some of these officials were very reasonable and succeeded in getting full information; while others were very abusive and profane, using language which was very unbecoming for any one, especially in an official capacity. Naturally these last got very little information. What the result would have been, had these signers been convicted of violating the Espionage law is not easy to determine. All told, there were one hundred ninety-seven names on the paper. Some of these could, and possibly would have paid their fines at once; others were too poor for that, and some for conscientious reasons would not have paid if they could have done so nor allowed others to pay it

for them. Under these circumstances doubtless a large number would have been made to serve long sentences in the federal prisons. This would have robbed the churches of their pastors, and the influence would have been felt over a wide range of territory.

The case of Brethren L. J. Heatwole and R. W. Benner will be given somewhat in detail. The first is a letter which Bro. Heatwole wrote and which was the basis for prosecution:

Dale Enterprise, Va. July 15, 1918.

Dear Brother Benner, Greetings:

Your letter of the 11th is here....The clipping I enclose is no doubt a similar proclamation by the governor of your state. The tenor of this proclamation is that all people of the state and nation exercise the spirit of self-sacrifice. (Good). To pledge themselves to economy and thrift for the balance of the year. (Also good enough). To buy to the extent of their means as an evidence of their patriotism, war saving stamps for the support of boys in France. (Here comes the test.)

The advice given by our brethren of the General Conference Committee is that our brethren—

Do not aid or abet war in any form.

Receive no pay while held in detention camps.

Contribute nothing to a fund that is used to run the war machine.

In a number of places where brethren have refused to contribute to the different war funds, outlandish threats have been made and in a few cases have been put into execution—such as, tar and feathering, painting houses yellow, decorating autos and buildings with flags to test them out on their principles of nonresistance.

I have continued to give the advice of the General Conference committee to the brethren here, and would do the same to the brethren in West Virginia were I there, and take the consequences whatever they may be.

Some of our brethren here have yielded under pressure, others have subscribed to Red Cross funds and taken out war saving stamps, but of these so far as I know there are only a few.

If our brethren in camp can stand true to the faith of the Gospel, why should not we at home bear part of the pressure.....

Hurriedly, L. J. Heatwole.

Bro. Benner acted upon the instructions of Bishop Heatwole, advised his members as to what is the position of the Mennonite Church on these questions, with the result that both were later brought before the U. S. district court at Martinsburg, W. Va. Following is a recital of the case:

THE HEATWOLE-BENNER CASE

In the United States court, Martinsburg, W. Va., September 18, 1918.

Judge Alton Dayton, United States Judge, presiding.
Stewart W. Walker, United States district attorney.
George N. Conrad, attorney for the defense.
L. J. Heatwole and R. W. Benner called to the bar.

An array of United States clerks, marshals, bailiffs, messengers, jurymen and a lobby crowded with witnesses, spectators and curiosity seekers; complete the scene, at 2:30 P. M., when the court was called to order by all persons rising to their feet as the judge, robed in a silk gown, took his seat.

District Attorney Walker's Address to the Court

"If your honor please, the joint case, United States vs. Heatwole and Benner is presented for your consideration. Rev. L. J. Heatwole of Dale Enterprise, Va., who is a bishop in the Mennonite Church and Rev. R. W. Benner of Job, W. Va., in charge of a mission at that place for the same denomination, have been indicted by the grand jury of this court, and are held on a charge of a violation of the Espionage law, through a correspondence of last summer by which the former conveyed to the latter by letter instructions that forbade members of his Church to buy war saving stamps, and the latter by conveying the same instructions to his members, the grand jury finds a case in which the honor and dignity of the United States government has been disregarded in maintaining its Espionage laws. Since these laws have been violated each party of this correspondence stands indicted in this court in the penalty of ten thousand dollars with another additional ten thousand dollars for both. It being known, however, that there are circumstances connected with this case that call for exercising some degree of clemency, it is suggested that the defense enter a plea of guilty which allows that the reading of the indictment be omitted—a proposition to which we agree since it is a lengthy document.

"At this juncture we introduce to the court as counsel for the defense Senator George N. Conrad of Virginia."

Senator Conrad's Address to the Court

"If your honor please, it seems appropriate and in good form for me to appeal to the court for every consideration it may allow for these two gentlemen whose names are mentioned in connection with this indictment. I am personally acquainted with both of them, and since they are ministers of the Gospel, neither having before violated the law, and further since both represent a denomination whose people have for centuries stood for the principle of nonresistance in time of peace as well as in time of war; and in view of the fact that the act of Bishop Heatwole in conveying to Rev. Benner information as to solicitation of the latter and the members of his charge in the attitude of the Church in time of war, was done on solicitation of the latter and members of his charge in West Virginia, it would not be militant against the dignity of the law to allow the fullest degree of clemency for this case. My personal acquaintance of these men, one of whom I have known for thirty years, prompts me to say that neither would intentionally violate any law, and recognizing that the violation in this case is merely technical, and that the offense will not be repeated, we believe that the court will grant the clemency that the case demands."

District Attorney Walker's Rejoinder

"If your honor please, the prosecution is ready with the court's permission to recognize for the defense the plea of guilty, and since the honor and dignity of the United States government has been violated only technically, and since Bishop Heatwole wrote what he did from the promptings of a zeal which he had for a creed which I myself am not able to understand—and since it appears from the facts in the case that both ministers were acting in the full capacity of their calling, the dignity of the Espionage law can be sustained by reducing the maximum fine to one thousand dollars and costs for each, with the understanding that the offense be not repeated, and that the fines and costs be paid within thirty days from date."

To this agreement between counsel, Judge Dayton assented, and the brethren were at once discharged.

R. W. Benner, who had given out the information received from L. J. Heatwole, was arrested by

a U. S. marshal, given a hearing and declared to be worse than the Germans. Two brethren from his congregation followed him to Elkins, W. Va., and secured his release on bail to appear at Martinsburg for trial as above stated.

L. J. Heatwole, the writer of the letter, was not arrested but was informed of the affair by Bro. Benner's attorney. He went to Martinsburg and found that a plea of guilty had already been entered for both Heatwole and Benner. This agreement had been reached and the fine fixed by the attorney for the defendants and the United States district attorney. At the trial neither of the two stood and plead guilty, as is usually done in such cases, nor was the indictment read in open court.

Senator Conrad's Statement

"Last June (1918) some members in the Mennonite Church in the neighborhood of Job, W. Va., were informed that every person was to buy war saving stamps, or give his reason for not doing so. Some members applied to Rev. R. W. Benner, the preacher in charge of the congregation, for information as to what they should do, and he wrote to Bishop L. J. Heatwole for advice as to what attitude the members should take in reference to the matter.

"Bishop Heatwole replied that the General Conference of the Church had advised that they should contribute nothing to a fund that was to be used to run the war machine and he would give the same advice to the brethren in West Virginia. (For General Conference advice, see "Mennonites on Military Service, Chapter V.) After receiving that letter, Rev. Benner wrote to a number of members at and near Job, advising them to 'go and give their reasons,' but not to buy stamps.

"The Congress of the United States had, in May 1918, amended what is known as the Espionage law so as to provide that no person should say or do anything except by bona fide and not disloyal advice to an investor with the intent to obstruct the sale by the United States of bonds or other securities of the United States, and provided as a penalty a punishment by fine of not more than ten

thousand dollars or imprisonment for more than ten years or both

"Agents of the government obtained one or more of the letters which Rev. Benner had written, and also obtained the letter which Bishop Heatwole wrote, and the grand jury of the United States court at Martinsburg, brought an indictment against both Rev. Benner and Bishop Heatwole, charging that by their letters they had violated the espionage law.

"There was no dispute as to what the facts were. Inasmuch as the representatives of government had concluded that the writing of these letters and mailing them was a violation of the law, it was considered proper for both Rev. Benner and Bishop Heatwole to accept the conclusions that government officials had reached, and to pay such fine as might be placed upon them.

"A plea of guilty was therefore entered and a fine of one thousand dollars each with costs was placed upon Bishop Heatwole and Rev. Benner respectively, granting them thirty days, however, within which to pay the fine and the costs. It was considered by representatives of the government that these fines should be imposed, not so much as a punishment to Bishop Heatwole and Rev. Benner, but as a precedent and a warning to all other persons belonging to the Mennonite Church, or persons holding similar doctrines.

"It became necessary to employ an attorney in behalf of Bishop Heatwole and Rev. Benner in connection with this matter, and the fee to be paid to the attorney, together with the costs and the fine amount to two thousand two hundred fifty-six dollars."

Another case which attracted wide attention was the arrest and fine imposed upon Brethren S. H. Miller and M. E. Bontrager.

An article appeared in the Sugar Creek Budget, Sugar Creek, O., written by M. E. Bontrager of Dodge City, Kan. S. H. Miller was editor of the paper and in his absence from the office the article was published. The position which he held made him the responsible party for what appeared in its columns. The article was very innocent in its content, but the grand jury of the United States district court interpreted it as being "intended to promote the success of the enemy now at war with the United States;" that the parties "did then and there,

unlawfully, wilfully, and feloniously make and convey false reports and false statements by publishing and causing to be published in a certain newspaper known as the Weekly Budget....with the intention to interfere with the operations and success of the military and naval forces....did then and there unlawfully, wilfully and feloniously cause and attempt to cause, and incite and attempt to incite insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny and refusal to duty in the military forces of the United States...."

To put said article and these charges side by side, or to read these charges in the light of that article twenty-five years hence will surely provoke a smile on the face of any reader; for there was absolutely nothing in the article to merit such an indictment.

An officer came to interview Bro. Miller and the latter went at once to Cleveland, O., without being under arrest; but when he refused to plead guilty of the charges he was placed behind the bars until bail could be secured, regardless of the fact that one of his friends offered to supply an amount of money equal to the amount of bail asked, into the hands of the court.

When the trial was called, Bro. Miller, not having an attorney, asked permission to make a statement. It was granted. He told the court that he could not plead guilty to the charges in the indictment, but confessed that the article in question was published in the Budget of May 15, 1918, and stated that he was sorry that it happened, and explained how it was done. The court accepted his statement and fined him five hundred dollars, which with the cost amounted to about nine hundred dollars.

From the experiences given in the last few chapters, we draw the following conclusions:

First, that the freedom of worship guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States is not to be construed to mean that you have an undisputed right to live and teach the whole Gospel as you understand it. When we apply that Gospel to technicalities, others will undertake to say whether we dare teach and live it.

Second, that suffering for Christ's sake is not a thing of the past, but found even in this enlightened day and in this country of boasted freedom.

Third, that God will care for His own if they must pass through hard trials for His sake, that with every trial He gives a blessing which repays all the hardships suffered.

Fourth, that violations which occurred in the faithful discharge of duty with no intention to harm any one nor hinder government—violations that are such only in a very technical sense—were watched and prosecuted the same as any other.

Fifth, that fines were not always based on the offense, but were sometimes made large so that others might fear and avoid getting into the same difficulty. In other words, some fines were intended to cover the extent of the wrong done plus paying the expenses of giving warning to others. (See Senator Conrad's statement in this chapter.)

Sixth, that some who for conscience' sake pursued a course that subjected them to the charge of disloyalty have since the war is over lived a loyalty that says more than the loyalty of self-proclaimed patriots who in so many cases have since proved

untrue to their fellowman, their country, and their God.

While it seems to us very wrong that a government (or individuals in it) should have the right to prosecute any one who faithfully teaches the members of his flock the Bible as he understands it and as God has called him to do, and that officers in the employ of government should try to compel young men to do what they actually believed to be wrong, it is a comfort to know that those remaining true to their convictions and to God, though they were compelled to suffer, are doing so for Christ's sake. "If, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." "They departed....rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

CHAPTER XIII

CAMP VISITATIONS

Duty of Pastors to the Brethren in Camp

It is the duty of the pastor to look after his flock regardless of where it is, or through what trials it is required to pass, especially when the flock has no choice in the matter. Before any of the drafted men went to camp the question of how to care for the brethren who would be thus isolated, and be in environments which were not conducive to spirituality, was discussed a great deal in conferences, in private conversation, and by correspondence. Parents who had sons in camp were also vitally interested. No precedent had been established, and while it was evident that the brethren could be visited, no one knew under what circumstances it could be done or what Christian privileges either the boys or the visitors would have. Could ministers hold preaching services? Could the young brethren have Sunday school or any other religious exercises? A great many questions arose regarding the spiritual help that could be given which time alone could answer.

Work of Committees

The various conferences saw that no definite action could be taken which would adequately meet the needs—not even after many had been in camp for some time because of the various war orders

which were sent out from Washington in quick succession, the difference in the methods of work in the different camps, and conflicting actions of officers in the same camp. Conditions must be met in some other way. The work was generally given over to committees who were to see that necessary aid should be given in the best manner possible. Some of the conferences united in this work. Three conferences west of the Mississippi River had one committee. This plan had some advantages as well as a few disadvantages. In spite of the fact that these committees did noble work, the most difficult problems arising out of misunderstandings between the officials and brethren in the camps fell to a few men scattered all the way from the eastern to the western coast. I. B. Good and J. C. Habecker in eastern Pennsylvania, Aaron Loucks in the western part of the same state, D. D. Miller in Indiana, S. C. Yoder in Iowa, D. H. Bender in Kansas, and E. Z. Yoder on the western coast were among those who gave themselves over to this work and their services were in great demand.

Segregation

The war department ordered that those who refused to wear the uniform and to accept noncombatant service should be segregated. At Camp Meade (Md.) this was understood to mean that civilians would not be allowed to go into the barracks; that segregation practically means imprisonment. A soldier stood at the door and would call any young man provided the visitor named the one wanted. They could visit for half an hour, but it must be done in the presence of the guard. This gave no

opportunity for religious services except such as the young men could hold among themselves. At first the interpretation was very different from this at Camp Taylor (Ky.). There the ministers were allowed to come into the barracks, eat with their friends in camp, hold services, and visit for hours. One minister who had a son there was even allowed to sleep there. Some other camps regarded the guard-house as the only proper segregation. Between these two extremes could be classed all the camps in the United States.

Getting an Understanding at Camp Meade

Aaron Loucks and D. D. Miller, two of the committee appointed by the General Conference to interview the war department concerning the status of our brethren in the draft, had occasion to make a second trip to Washington, and hearing of the conditions which prevailed there, went by way of Camp Meade and asked to see the brethren. The guard said that he would call any one out that they wanted to see and asked who they wanted. They replied that they wanted to see all the Mennonite boys, but they were told that they would have to name them. They left the camp without seeing any of them. In company with I. B. Good and J. C. Habecker, the committee appointed by the Lancaster Conference to look after their brethren who were drafted, and William Derstine of the Franconia Conference, they proceeded to Washington. They called on Provost Marshal General Crowder and reported their experience at Camp Meade. The General at once called up Secretary Baker by phone, and got orders to call up the commander at Meade and tell him to so arrange

matters that the brethren Good and Habecker could hold religious services in the C. O. barracks the next day. This was done, and later the department made arrangements so that services could be held there regularly. A few weeks later Bishop P. R. Nissley accompanied the brethren who went there to hold services and they observed the communion. Quite an experience—a Mennonite bishop in a war camp holding a service in commemoration of the suffering, death and atonement of the Prince of Peace; but that was caring for the flock, and shows one of the needs and opportunities of camp visitation. These two brethren wrote up a full account of their many visits to this camp. This will be important history in the future.

Centralizing the Work

With all that good work being done in visiting camps, answering letters, etc., matters were constantly becoming more and more complicated. Camp officials were trying to drive our brethren into the service. More correspondence with Washington became necessary and more requests were coming in asking that certain young men in the camps be aided. With the drives for war funds came demands for more meetings for consultation. All of this meant better organization. It called for one man as leader. It was better that he should come to such leadership by force of circumstances than by election. It was but natural that Aaron Loucks, chairman of the committee appointed by General Conference to look after the welfare of the draftees, should be that man. His counsel and help were in almost constant demand. Being away from home much of the time

his letters and telegrams would often not be answered for a long time. This was very unsatisfactory, both to Brother Loucks and to the correspondents. It was decided that he must have help, some one to take charge of the correspondence. J. S. Hartzler of Goshen, Ind., was asked to do this and went to Scottdale to take up the work. With increased help came increased demands. Both men were busy. For months at a time Bro. Loucks could not have made all the calls that were asked for, even if he had remained on the road all the time.

Some seemed to think that there were few limits to the powers of those who would visit camps regularly. One father wrote, "They have taken my boy to Camp. I do not like that. I want you to go down there and have him transferred to one of the northern camps—either Sherman or Taylor." Imagine about how much good it would have done to have gone to a camp or to have written to the war department requesting such a change.

Benefit to the Parents

But the young men in camp were not the only ones who were benefited by these visits. In many cases the parents at home were suffering more than their sons in camp. Sometimes because the mails were not regular, they imagined that their loved ones were sick or imprisoned and were not allowed to write, and a visit with the son and a letter to the parents soothed many a troubled heart. To know that some one had visited their son, some one who could help him to solve some of his problems, was like a healing balm to the broken heart. Many a mother slept better after receiving a letter stating

that her son had been visited, was faring well, and was in good cheer.

Benefit to Camp Commanders

Even camp commanders and officers under him were benefited by these visits. It was very difficult for such officials to understand how any one could take the position of the C. O. and be anything else than a German sympathizer, a slacker, or a coward. Many were honest in their convictions and were glad for an opportunity to discuss the subject with some one who because of age and experience was better versed on the subject than many of the young men were. Many of these officers would discuss the doctrine of nonresistance with the ministers for an hour or more and thus see whether the visitors and the C. O.'s agreed on the subject. The majority of the officials would hardly admit that they had received any new light on the subject of the new life, but in many cases their actions toward the Christian young men were more considerate after such visits.

A brother called at a certain camp and after talking with the brethren for a time went to see one of the higher officials who received him cordially. After discussing the C. O. problem the officer said that he had been expecting the board of inquiry for some time but as yet had heard nothing from it. The brother asked whether he had reported to the department at Washington that there were any C. O.'s in his camp. The officer looked a little surprised at such a question and said, "No." The brother took a paper from his pocket and showed him that on the first day of each month, camp commanders who had C. O.'s in their camps should report the same

to the war department at Washington. What happened after that is not known, but reasonably soon after the beginning of the next month the C. O.'s were transferred to another camp where they met the board a few days later.

Wilful Neglect

Again, camp visits were necessary because some camp commanders, and especially under officers, were wilfully neglecting to observe orders from Washington, or were so construing them as to make them meaningless. As stated before, all post and camp commanders were required to report at the beginning of each month the names of all persons under their respective commands who professed religious or other conscientious scruples, and "who have not been willing to accept by reason of such scruples, assignment to noncombatant military service." This order also required that such report should contain a brief, comprehensive statement as to the nature of the objection. This shows that provisions were made for such as could not accept either combatant or noncombatant service, and that the war department actually expected that there would be such. In spite of this, commanders were constantly trying to force such work upon the C. O.'s, many of whom were too inexperienced to handle such a situation, and appealed for help. Persons from outside could do much more especially if it was evident that they knew their business. Here were men whose sole interest in camp was to see that Christian young men got the treatment that the department had provided for them. While it was the business of the officials to get as many to accept service as

they could, using legitimate means in doing it, they were more careful in the methods used because they could not tell how soon such camp visitors might come or whom they might befriend if they came.

Undue Criticism

It is a self evident fact that President Wilson and the Congress of the United States have been unwisely criticised by some of the C. O.'s and their friends (more from the political than the religious objectors) because Government did not meet the situation better from the standpoint of the objector. As representatives of the people they were obliged to consider the wishes of their constituency; also, the conscientious objectors constituted such a small per cent of the whole that to make them an exception might have proven a misfortune, both the officials and to those excepted. Taking all these things into consideration one can not account for the regard and privilges which the nonresistant people received, both at the hands of the law-makers and of the camp officials otherwise than by an honest effort on the part of those who made the laws, even though they did not understand our position nor agree with it, and the over-ruling and protection of our heavenly Father for His own.

Position of the Official

Camp officials, too, had reasons for their actions in many cases. There were actual "slackers," and the C. O. cloak was a good one under which to hide. Those had to be sifted out, and testing was the only method that some of the officers knew for sifting. Then again, while the officers were in training they were taught that every man must serve. They were

not taught that there were a few exceptions; that these were to be excused because they had a conscience against war. Every man MUST. The officer was boss of men and was himself under a boss. His boss expected him to see that conditions were met according to the rules of war. His promotion depended upon how well he succeeded in getting every man trained in the part required. It is easy to see why officials were so persistent, and equally easy to see the need of proper camp visiting.

Injudicious Camp Visiting

Not all such visiting was proper, however. Some visits had better never been made. One minister, in his desire to go just as far as he could to comply with the desires of a camp official and at the same time not violate a Christian principle, upon hearing the explanation of a certain kind of work said, "Certainly our boys can do that." He had not investigated the matter nor consulted the young men who were in constant touch with the work and knew better all the points involved. After that the officer insisted that the work be done and the nonresistants all refused to do it. To the officer this looked like stubbornness. One of the brethren wrote to his pastor to come at once. After the pastor and the boys had carefully gone over the matter the former went to the officer and said, "I am sorry, but our boys cannot conscientiously do the work which has been assigned to them, and I cannot encourage them to do it. I could not do it if I were placed in like circumstances." The officer said, "Some time ago a minister who claimed that he was a Mennonite was here and he said that the boys could do this work;

now you say that they cannot. I believe that you had better go home and agree among yourselves as to what you want, then come here and we will talk it over. We will not get anywhere this way"—and he was right. There were other injudicious visits which did more to confuse than to set matters right. Considering the training of the officers, the small number of nonresistants as compared with the great and mighty army, and the disagreement of pastors as to the work that could be done with consistency, we can be thankful indeed for the consideration received, and that camp visits were not much more necessary than they were. "Truly, God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart."

CHAPTER XIV

RELIEF WORK

Causes

War is always cruel. Killing and destroying property are its immediate aims. Cripples, widows, orphans, immense national debt, and enormous taxes are a few of the results which follow in its trail for many years, while some of the more immediate results are starvation, exposure, and epidemics. Grief caused by war is indescribable. With improved implements used in the late conflict all these calamities were correspondingly increased.

Conditions in War Countries

Armies surged back and forth; strategic points were taken by one army only to be retaken by the enemy. Homes were either burned or wrecked by bursting shells from the enormous cannon. Mine and shell holes from two to twenty feet deep were in evidence. When the enemy came upon a town or neighborhood the common people fled from their homes taking with them a few of their belongings, such as could be gathered in haste and conveyed to places of safety. But when they came back they found their homes gone and their fields in such a condition that they could not be farmed. Aside from being shell-torn, much of the land was covered

with tons and tons of barbed wire which had been used for defense.

Other countries away from these contested places were not so badly torn but were robbed of their cattle, horses, crops, and in fact everything that would be of use to the army. The people were left destitute and the suffering was intense. If these people were to be saved from starvation, help must come from sources outside of their own country. Information came to this country through the newspapers, Red Cross, consuls, and other agencies and the people were touched with sympathy. Many wanted to give toward feeding and clothing the people and helping them to rebuild their homes.

Avenues Through Which to Help

Not knowing where to send their contributions and still remain consistent with the nonresistant doctrine, many Mennonites began to send money to the treasurer of the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, G. L. Bender, Elkhart, Indiana. He sought ways and means of distributing this money but for a time found none that were very satisfactory. The Red Cross and the Y. M. C. A. were ready to assume the responsibility but there were objections to both. First, they were allied with the war, and to give them money was only another way of abetting the conflict; second, both distributed tobacco in some form, and other things objectionable, among the soldiers, both in this country and in Europe, thus tending to debauch the soldier rather than to lift him up. This was more than many people could endorse, and it became more and more evident that a separate organization should be effected

which would inform the Church of the needs and would solicit liberal contributions in order to carry on relief work more effectively.

Mennonite Relief Commission for War Sufferers

A missionary conference was held at the Forks Church near Middlebury, Indiana, December 24-26, 1917, and it was determined to bring up the matter at that meeting. This was done and a lively discussion followed. As a result the Mennonite Relief Commission for War Sufferers was organized. A constitution was drawn up and adopted. Article II of this document reads: "The object of this organization shall be to solicit, receive, hold and disburse or distribute funds or supplies for the relief of war sufferers." The last two words are suggestive as to the intended duration. So is also the last article in the constitution: "After the conditions which call for the organization of this commission shall have ceased to exist, this organization shall be disbanded." Later many have thought that it should be organized on a more permanent basis so as to be ready for any emergency along the special line of its work.

Our Obligation

Information went out rapidly. Announcements were made in the congregations and through the church papers. Those who had been at the conference were full of the subject and talked it wherever they went. If we could not support the Red Cross or the Y. M. C. A., we were none the less under obligation to relieve suffering which seemed to be on the increase. Tracts were sent out; articles and editorials appeared in the church papers, setting forth conditions, and showing the obligations of

stewardship. People were being pressed to support war measures, and many gave as much to alleviate distress as they would have been asked to give to support the war; others doubled or trebled these amounts. At the time of the organization of the Commission some thought that it would be possible to raise one hundred thousand dollars, but it was soon beyond that. Several of the smaller branches of Mennonites were given representation in the organization and contributed liberally. Then it was suggested that the Commission in company with the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities should try to raise two hundred thousand dollars, but in one year from its organization that amount was exceeded by an additional fourth of that amount, is still coming in and doubtless will so long as the need is so great.

Mennonites in Canada and Relief

In Canada it was thought best to do their relief work through an organization that was Canadian rather than to send their contributions to an organization existing in another country. As Mennonites and Tunkers united in an effort to raise two hundred thousand dollars for this purpose it cannot be definitely determined how much was raised by Mennonites alone. However, knowing the amounts raised by the Commission and the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities and making a conservative estimate of the part raised by the Mennonites of Canada, it is evident that before the signing of the Armistice, November 11, 1918, the total amount raised by the Mennonites in America had passed the four hundred thousand dollar mark with

money still coming in. Very good—and yet it could not be truthfully said of the Church, "She hath done what she could," for she might have done still much more.

Seeking Avenues for Work

With the increase of funds naturally came the question of the best means of applying them. The Church wanted to send workers as well as money. The Red Cross being international in scope had received exclusive rights for carrying on relief work in the war-stricken districts except where organized relief was already being carried on. Most of the churches did their work through the Red Cross, but that required the military uniform and was directly and organically allied with the army. The ordinary C. O. could no more work consistently with this organization than he could do noncombatant work in the army. It was also considered advisable, if possible, to get a certain section in the war-stricken district for which the Church would become responsible for both relief and reconstruction, as that would create greater interest and men and money would be forthcoming more abundantly, but no such place could be secured.

Work of the English Friends

Early in the conflict the English Friends began work in devastated places in France. When this country entered the war the American Friends desired a place where they could work, but the Red Cross was on the ground first. However, the American Friends succeeded in getting into the work under the English Society. American Friends invited the Mennonites to work with them. This was ac-

cepted and the Relief Commission at once began to send a stipulated amount of five thousand dollars each month to the Friends for reconstruction. On several occasions, when the need became very urgent, the Commission furnished twenty thousand dollars aside from the monthly amount. This was continued until the sector assigned to the Friends had been brought to a fair state of habitation and cultivation.

Furnishing Men as Well as Money

A number of our brethren would have been glad to go to France and aid in the work of relief and reconstruction as soon as the way opened, but the scarcity of farm labor seemed to require all the available force in this country to supply the needed food. Much had been shipped to the warring countries and the prices for farm produce were almost prohibitive, especially to the poor, hence Mennonite boys who were not called to camp were urged to help on the farms. However, some of the boys who were in camp were furloughed for reconstruction work in France under the Friends. Others would have been glad to go because they could have been a benefit to mankind there instead of remaining in camp where they were consumers and were not able to do anything constructively, but the Board of Inquiry refused them that privilege. After their discharge from camp, quite a number of Mennonites accepted the invitation of the Friends to spend one year in this work.

Brethren Allgyer and Smucker Sent to France

Suggestions came from the Friends, from brethren in the service of the Friends, and from a

number of the Church leaders that one or two brethren be sent to France to inspect the work that was being done and bring a report back to America. It was finally decided to send two, one an elderly man, well known in the Church and the other a young man. The Commission chose Brethren Samuel E. Allgyer of West Liberty, Ohio, and Vernon Smucker of Orrville, Ohio, but later of Scottdale, Pennsylvania. These reports gave new impetus to the work and the interest was well sustained until the Friends decided that the work had better be left and other more needy places taken up.

Work in Syria and Armenia

The American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (later known as Near East Relief Committee) had been at work in these countries almost from the beginning of the war, but had been doing their work through the missionaries on the field. Many people were touched by the reports of atrocities committed by the Turks, and the sufferings of the Armenians, and sent money to the Relief Commission with the instructions that it be used to relieve suffering in that country. The Commission found this Committee an avenue thru which to carry out these instructions, and for a time furnished one thousand dollars per month for relief work in these countries but later increased it to fifteen hundred dollars per month.

While France, Belgium, and Italy were torn by shot and shell, Armenia and Syria suffered more from other causes. The people were driven from their homes, robbed of their valuables, even to the clothing which they wore. Their crops were de-

stroyed, or where it could be done, taken to the Turkish army. Some were driven into deserts to die of starvation while others were required to suffer tortures which were worse than death. Thousands died from these abuses. Some made their way to places of comparative safety such as Russia, Egypt, Jerusalem, or to some place in their own country where the danger was not so great. But what when they reached those places? In most cases there was not food sufficient to feed the residents, and because of the war food was both expensive and very hard to get. Besides, the ever present profiteers were getting and holding these things for higher prices. A very limited amount of relief work was done during the war, but this was done almost entirely through the missionaries, and was principally given to women and children because it was considered that men were better able to provide for themselves. When the war was over some villages in Syria and Armenia had lost about seventy per cent of their men by starvation. Newspapers presented conditions in heart-rending terms.

The First Contingent Sent to the Near East

Many people urged that the Church send some young men to the Near East to do reconstruction work, and thought that it might be an advantage to have a certain territory for which the Mennonites should make themselves responsible. As the American Committee was about to send a number of men, the Committee invited the Mennonite Commission to send a number with them. At the same time there was more or less agitation that two older men should be sent along and get information first hand

and bring it back to the Church. At a joint meeting of the Executive Committee of the Mennonite Relief Commission, some members of the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities and members of the Lancaster and Franconia Conferences, held in the city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, January 4, 1919, it was decided to accept the offer of the American Committee and send several young workers and two older ones who should go and remain long enough to get a fair first hand knowledge of conditions and return. Brethren Aaron Loucks, Scottdale, and William Derstine, Quakertown, both Pennsylvania, were selected to accompany the workers.

From Eye-witnesses

A number of those who are responsible for this book thought that one of those who had been on the field in France, and one who had been connected with the work in the Near East should each write out some of their experiences and observations for this book. Brethren Vernon Smucker, then of Orrville, Ohio, and Orie O. Miller of Akron, Pennsylvania, have been chosen, and it is a great pleasure to have their contributions follow:

I. Our Relief Work in France

By Vernon Smucker

On the afternoon of May 24, 1919, the steamship Orduna of the Cunard Line sailed out of New York Harbor for Liverpool, England. Brother S. E. Allgyer and myself had left our homes some time before this and for over a week had stopped at Philadelphia where we were provided with the necessities

for our voyage by the American Friends Service Committee, received passports, credentials, and other necessary papers, and then proceeded to New York in time to board the above mentioned vessel. We were on our way to France, sent by the Mennonite Relief Commission and the American Friends Service Committee to investigate the work which our Mennonite brethren were doing in the war-stricken districts of France under the supervision of the Friends, as well as to bring them encouragement and cheer and to assure them of the support and good will of the Church at home in the work which they had undertaken.

After an exceptionally smooth and pleasant voyage we landed at Liverpool, England, on June 2. The next day we proceeded to London where we were met and provided for by English Friends. A little over a day was spent here getting the necessary papers, etc., after which we left for Paris, arriving there on the evening of June 5. A day was spent here in getting the required papers and credentials to travel in the war zone, and after an all-day trip from Paris we reached Clermont-en-Argonne on the evening of June 7. Our journey was uneventful but interesting, and everywhere we were shown the greatest courtesy. Travel in the war zone was then very much restricted. In fact no one was allowed to go there except by official permission based on good reasons. All our papers, passports, etc., were secured with the aid of the Friends who were a recognized relief agency and had established official connections, so that we experienced little or no difficulties along these lines.

At the time of our arrival in France some over

three hundred persons were associated in relief work in what was termed the Friends' Mission. Of these, the majority were Americans, though a number were English. In the early days of the work and during the war a majority of the workers in the Mission were English, but later the Americans predominated. Out of the number there in June, 1919, fifty-one were Mennonites. Two Mennonites had already returned to their homes after a year of service. This made a total of fifty-three who were engaged in relief work in France. Five or six of this number were members of some of the smaller divisions in the central west, and not directly affiliated with the main branch of the Church, but the others were from our congregations in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Canada. With a few exceptions, all of the brethren had been to camp. Some were furloughed from camp in order that they might take up this work and others had gone after the signing of the armistice and their consequent release from all military obligations. Some had spent time at the Ft. Leavenworth military prison and went to France directly after their release, though of course under no obligations to do so.

We found the relief work in France thoroughly organized and efficiently conducted. One of the important phases of work was the building of temporary wooden houses in the war-stricken districts so as to enable the people to come back to their old homes from which they had been forced to flee during the war. In the southern part of France the Friends had established two factories, one at Dole and the other at Ornans, where houses were built

in sections. The houses were two or three room structures, sometimes larger, and sometimes with a hangar or shed attached for the live stock which the family owned. The buildings were standardized, each section numbered or marked, and these sections shipped direct to the war-devastated areas. A number of our people, probably a dozen in all, were at one time or another stationed in these quiet villages, far from the scene of war and destruction, doing the routine work of building sections and shipping them to the north where they were erected as homes for the grateful French people.

Previous to our visit in France the work of relief had been carried on in a more or less scattered area, but shortly before our arrival there the Red Cross gave over to the Friends what was known as the Verdun sector, where some of the hardest battles of the war had been fought. This comprised a section almost two hundred square miles in area and in many places presented a most desolate aspect. Scores of once prosperous villages lay in ruins, some without one single habitable dwelling, others with some buildings which could be repaired, and still others which escaped more or less unharmed, though the latter were few. Barbed wire entanglements, trenches, shell-holes, mine-craters, ammunition, and various implements of war were everywhere in evidence and bore mute testimony to the fierceness and hatred with which the war had been waged.

The main offices of the Friends' organization were at Paris, but the actual administration of the work was carried on from Grange-le-Comte, a large rural estate near Clermont-en-Argonne, in the province of Meuse, in the aforementioned Verdun sector.

This was a busy place. Over one hundred workers were gathered here, taking care of the stores, supplies, etc., which were received here and then distributed to the various smaller groups out in the surrounding villages. Probably twelve or fifteen of our brethren were stationed at Grange, helping in the various activities here. Over a hundred motor vehicles of various kinds, ranging from giant Liberty trucks to motorcycles, were gathered in the yard at night. It took a small corps of mechanics to keep these in repair, two of our brethren among them for a time. Immense stores of food supplies, clothing, and other necessaries of life were stored here, to be sent out to the smaller stations, or *equipes* as they were called, for use both of the workers and of the French people. The old chateau was fitted up for offices and its walls redounded with the merry click of typewriters, while substantial outbuildings, temporary barracks and even tents did duty for furnishing shelter to the workers. A large mess hall or dining room was built and other temporary improvements were made. All this is mentioned to convey some idea of the kind and magnitude of the work in which our brethren were engaged.

The majority of our brethren who were not in the carpenter shops in southern France, or at Grange taking care of and sending out supplies, were stationed in small villages within a radius of five or ten miles from Grange doing actual building work. Small groups, or *equipes,* composed of from five to twenty-five individuals, organized with a *chef* and a *sous-chef* (leader and assistant), would go out into a destroyed village, erect a temporary shelter until a building could be set up, by some means get in

touch with the mayor or some other pre-war official of the village, find out who wanted to return, who owned the land, where they desired the building to be located, etc., and then, being furnished with house sections and supplies by the transport department, would prepare foundations and begin to erect houses. With four or five men working on one house it took an average of about two days or a little less to complete the house and have it ready for occupation by the family for which it was intended. Often the family would return even before the house was entirely completed. In some mysterious way the word went out that a village was being rebuilt and soon the refugees of that village would be coming back. Sometimes the houses would be erected on the same plot of ground on which the ruins of the old lay, and at other times the new houses were built on sort of a village common to one side of the ruined village. In this way villages which were wholly desolate would in the course of a few weeks or a few months become alive with returned refugees, and old neighbors would compare experiences during the past years of the war, congratulate themselves that it was all over, and once more begin their struggle for existence. A strange joy and good cheer seemed to radiate from each one,—for were they not again at home, in their own village, and on their own plot of ground?

Our brethren in the building work were not sent out in separate or distinctly Mennonite groups, but some were included in different groups, with the Friends and other workers. At one time there was a suggestion from our brethren themselves that they be sent out as Mennonite groups, but the suggestion

was not looked upon with favor by the heads of the Mission and the brethren soon decided that perhaps it would not be for the best if they were thus sent out. In some of the groups none of our brethren were included, in others the number ranged from one to three, and in one of the groups there were at one time five and later eight Mennonites out of a total of not over ten or twelve in the whole group. This was very exceptional, however, and was a matter of chance rather than deliberate design on the part of those in authority. It may be noted that this particular group surpassed any other in the number of houses erected in a given time, and while there may have been various reasons for this, the heads of the Mission attributed it to the faithful and conscientious work of "The Mennonites," holding this particular group up as an example for the others. It was partly the spirit of rivalry thus created which convinced our brethren of the undesirability of working in separate groups, since there was danger that the rivalry might not always be friendly on the part of those groups that were surpassed in their own organization by members of another denomination.

But building houses and enabling the French people to come back to their homes did not end the responsibility of the relief workers. The country was devastated. All the live stock, farming tools, food supplies, etc., had been destroyed or carried off. The land was covered with barbed-wire, trenches, shell-holes, or ammunition, and it required time before it could again be made productive. Meanwhile, and until railway service and shipping facilities were again restored to normal conditions, it was necessary that these people should be in some way provided

for. Otherwise they would starve in their own homes.

To meet these conditions, stores were established in the different villages and goods were sold at cost, or less, to the returned refugees. Food supplies were made available and in cases of extreme need food and clothing were given away. As a rule, however, this was not necessary, and every effort was made to prevent the people from becoming pauperized. It will readily be seen that the transporting of goods was an important factor in giving relief and several of our brethren were busily engaged in this work, using the big Liberty trucks, which had been built for war and destruction, for bringing comfort and cheer to the needy.

An agricultural department was also maintained and several of our brethren were engaged in that work. This consisted largely of plowing (either with horses or tractors), threshing grain, making hay, etc. These operations were not without their dangers, for sometimes an unexploded shell would lie in the field, or be buried just beneath the surface, needing only a touch at the proper place by the knife of the mower or the point of the plow to explode its deadly charge. Fortunately none of the relief workers were injured through any of these dangers. Mowers and various kinds of agricultural implements were purchased by the Mission and loaned to the farmers to aid them in gathering their crops. The work of the agricultural department was not by any means the least important phase of relief work in France.

Among some of the other activities were such things as shipping goats, rabbits, chickens, and bees from other parts of France to the war-stricken regions and distributing them among the people. One

of our brethren was on a goat-buying expedition in southern France when we arrived at Clermont, and others were at some time or other engaged in some of the other activities. An effort was made by the heads of the Mission to give each man work along the line for which he was best fitted and trained. All of the work required self-reliance and courage in the strange surroundings, as well as the skill necessary to perform the needful tasks.

Dentists, doctors, nurses, and sanitary experts were also included among the workers of the Mission. Aside from looking after the health and well-being of the more than three hundred relief workers, they made regular trips to the surrounding villages and ministered to the needs of the French people. During the war, a maternity hospital was maintained at Chalons, where large numbers of mothers and new-born babes were temporarily cared for. This hospital has since been endowed by the Friends and established on a permanent basis as a memorial of the relief work done in France and the good will which prompted this service.

We were privileged to have a number of religious services with the brethren during the time we spent in their midst. Communion service was held in a small tent on one Sunday in the little shell-torn village of Aubreville, and at another time a two-day meeting was held, where subjects of general religious interest and concern were discussed. The brethren were much interested in hearing news from the home Church and seemed deeply grateful for the greetings and good wishes which we were privileged to bring them. We were pleased to learn that in a number of cases they had taken the initiative in

starting Sunday schools in the *equipes* in which they were working, and many of them exercised a very commendable religious zeal in their work and activities.

The executive heads of the Friends' organization spoke very highly of the work and character of the great majority of our brethren and expressed themselves as being highly pleased with their efforts. They gave them positions of responsibility, the same as their own men, and attributed a due share of the success of their undertaking to the work of the Mennonite boys, as well as to the financial aid given by the Mennonite Church.

The work naturally had a marked effect on the French people. Their attitude was kind and hospitable throughout. They soon learned that these men were opposed to war, and that they were doing these deeds of kindness not from any selfish motives but because of definite religious convictions. And while there was always the barrier of language to their free intercourse, yet we are sure that the language of love and good will is understood everywhere, without regard to race, color, or creed, and no one can tell what the final result of the work will be.

There is another class of people who will always remember the relief workers. Numerous prison camps were located in the area in which the work was done, where thousands of German prisoners of war awaited the final signing and ratifying of the peace treaty. A number of these prisoners were employed in working for the French and also for the Friends' Mission, giving the men an opportunity to come in direct contact with them. Many friend-

ships were formed and many expressions of gratitude were heard from the German prisoners toward those whom they had considered their enemies, but whom they now recognized as the enemies of none, and from whom they had received the first kind and considerate treatment that had been accorded them for months and in many cases years. Since these prisoners could not be recompensed for their work, and since the Friends' Mission did not feel that they could conscientiously employ prison labor as such, a careful record was taken of the home, family, and condition of every prisoner who worked for them, and later, during the winter of 1919-20, they sent three relief workers, including one of our brethren, into Germany to look up the families of these prisoners, give them all the news possible of son or husband or brother from whom nothing had been heard for so long, and pay them a fair wage for all the time which the prisoner had spent in the employ of the relief workers. Many touching incidents were met with in these visitations, and many never-to-be-forgotten impressions were received by both the visitors and the visited.

We believe that the money which we as a Church contributed to this work was well and efficiently spent and that the work which our brethren helped to do was necessary and important. We believe too that such of our brethren who faithfully let their lights shine in their work were blessed and made a blessing to those with whom they came in contact, and that many real opportunities were presented for faithfully witnessing for Christ and making known His teachings. To the extent that these opportunities were made use of we believe that our

participation in this relief work was a blessing to the Church in general and a much needed help to those who were in distress.

We spent about four weeks on the field, living with the brethren in the different *equipes* and getting all the first-hand knowledge and information possible. On July 9 the writer sailed for home on a troop transport from Brest, France, while Brother Allgyer spent a month longer in visiting among the Mennonite communities in France, Alsace, and Switzerland. The latter arrived home in time for a report to the General Conference held at Harrisonburg, Va., during the latter part of August, 1919.

II. Our Relief Work in the Near East and Russia

By Orie O. Miller

At the meeting held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the following few general decisions were made: first, that the invitation of the American Committee for opening work in Turkey and for sending over a group of workers, be accepted; second, that about a dozen brethren be appointed to constitute this first group; third that the brethren Aaron Loucks and William Derstine be appointed as leaders for this unit. They were instructed to accompany the Unit to the field, to direct the opening of the work, to determine its further policies, and after a few months to return to America and submit a report of their findings to the Relief Commission. Next, a list of prospective workers was drawn up. This included Mennonite men who were still in camps, others who had volunteered for service with the Friends' relief work in Europe, and other suggested names of those

thought to be interested in such work. Within three weeks eleven young men had accepted this invitation for service, and were appointed.

Near East Relief

On January 25, 1919, the first group of nine, sailed from New York on the Relief ship "Pensacola" direct for Beirut, Syria. Besides the brethren Loucks and Derstine, there were: Silas Hertzler of Newport News, Va.; Chris Graber of Noble, Iowa; Ezra Deter of Morrison, Illinois; Wm. and Frank Stoltzfus of Lima, Ohio; David Zimmerman and Orie O. Miller of Ephrata, Penna. Thirty-three non-Mennonite relief workers sailed on this same ship. The cargo consisted of several thousand tons of relief supplies including clothing, cloth, shoes, sewing machines, food, medicines, complete hospital and surgical equipment for twenty, one-hundred bed hospitals, several hundred auto trucks, etc. To Beirut was a trip of twenty-six days. At this time of the year the Atlantic Ocean is usually stormy and rough, and this trip was no exception. The stormy weather, the poor accommodations for living and sleeping on shipboard, and the poor food which was provided during most of the journey, kept all except the most hardy ones from enjoying the trip as they otherwise would have done. There were Turkish language lessons every day, and usually a lecture in the evening describing the land and the people of Turkey or discussing some phase of the work awaiting us. There were a number of books along these same lines available for reading, and among our own group there were daily Bible study and devotional hours. These various activities made the time pass

quickly and profitably for all those who could take advantage of them.

It was with a good deal of eagerness, but also with considerable anxiety, that we first sighted Beirut. This city was destined to be the scene of the whole year's service for some of us. Seven Mennonite workers, and three of the others with a goodly portion of the supplies were left at this port. The brethren Loucks and Derstine continued with the ship to Derindji, which is a small port on the Gulf of Ismid, and about fifty miles distant from Constantinople. They understood from the New York officials of the American Relief Committee that our Unit was to be located north of Syria, perhaps in Cilicia. This section would be more accessible from Constantinople than from Beirut. At Constantinople was the American Committee's main foreign office, and there the final arrangements for our work needed to be concluded.

Beirut is the port and largest city in the Lebanon. This district lies at the east end of the Mediterranean, between the ports of Tyre and Latakia. The length of its coast line is over a hundred miles and its average breadth about thirty. This region was nominally a part of pre-war Turkey, but the Lebanese always enjoyed a certain degree of independence. For instance, their men could not be conscripted into Turkish military service. As the war progressed this fact irritated the Turks more and more. Partly in retaliation, Lebanon had its food supply cut off. These rugged mountaineers had for generations past terraced and cultivated their rough mountain sides until every available foot of ground was made to produce; but still their

wheat, sugar, beans, and material for clothing all came from the outside. After these supplies were entirely cut off they suffered terribly. As the Turkish hatred of the Armenian resulted in deportations, so here their hatred of the Syrian resulted in a systematic starvation of a whole people. Out of a population of five hundred thousand more than one hundred and fifty thousand starved or died from the effects of starvation within a period of two years. Whole villages were depopulated, the houses left in ruins, the vineyards and orange groves neglected. Those who had not died there had gone to the larger cities in search of food.

Three and a half months previous to our arrival the American Red Cross had extended its work north from Jerusalem into Syria with headquarters at Beirut. Their workers had gone into these large cities and in the sub-districts into which the surrounding area was divided and relief was organized. Industrial workshops had been opened where women and girls were employed at a minimum living wage. At one time three thousand were so employed in Beirut alone. Here, at Sidon, Beirut, Damascus and at a number of other places orphanages had been opened into which were put full orphans and homeless children as they were picked off the streets or brought in from out-of-the-way places. In various centers soup kitchens were opened where a daily serving of soup and bread was issued to properly investigated needy cases. Hospitals, clinics, medical dispensaries, departments of clothing distribution, provided for the relief of other needy classes. At first all of the new workers helped in that organization. The understanding with the officials of the

Red Cross was that as soon as we would be called for by the brethren who had gone on to Constantinople, we would be released at Beirut.

Farther north in the Aleppo area the situation was worse in some respects and better in others. The plains about Aleppo for miles and miles are inhabited by Arabs. These are a nomadic people, moving east with their flocks and herds in winter and away from the desert as the hot, dry season comes on. They live on a lower stage of civilization than the Syrians. Their needs are very simple. Milk and meat for food, wool and hides for clothing are all furnished by their flocks. They usually camp long enough in one place during the summer to produce a few vegetables. A few cooking utensils and their weapons for fighting are about all they need from the outside world. They also suffered by the war but not so severely. But into this region the Armenians were deported. From all points of Asia Minor these lines of fleeing, persecuted, driven refugees converged towards Aleppo. Thousands and tens of thousands died along the way. The roads by which they came from Mardin, Marash, Caesarea, and the other large cities of the north were lined with their bleaching bones. But many succeeded in reaching Aleppo. After arriving they found no shelter, no food, no work. The Red Cross opened industrial shops, gave men work in building roads, distributed bread and soup in outdoor kitchens, furnished blankets, clothing, and hospital facilities, released Armenian girls from Turkish harems and made an effort to get people back to their homes. Here also our men helped out wherever they could.

About five weeks passed during which we had

no news from Brethren Loucks and Derstine. During this time the terms of several of the Red Cross workers expired. Others resigned and left. Some of our men were appointed to fill these vacancies which were positions of considerable responsibility. There were similar places in prospect for the others. In the meantime the two leaders who had gone on to Constantinople were disappointed in the attitude taken by Relief Committee officials there towards our mission. Because of Bro. Derstine's mechanical ability his services were, however, for a time, almost indispensable at Derindji. Here hundreds of motor trucks were being assembled for carrying supplies into the interior. He was given general charge of this work for this short time. Bro. Loucks accompanied the first train load of relief supplies through Anatolia and into Cilicia, investigating conditions enroute. At Adana he left the train, spent a few weeks in helping to unload the supplies there, and in becoming acquainted with the need in Adana, Tarsus, and surrounding parts. The New York office had suggested that we work as a Unit in this section. The conclusions of Bro. Loucks were that no opening existed for such work there, and he shortly returned for Bro. Derstine. Together they looked over this field again, and the above conclusions were confirmed in the minds of both. With this investigation they felt their work was done. It was deemed inadvisable to make further efforts to organize an independent Mennonite work. They arrived at Beirut on March 29 and spent Sunday with the group there, before continuing their journey to America. The workers at Beirut were disappointed in this report, but soon adjusted themselves to the

thought of spending the whole year's service in the Syrian field.

On April 1 the management, control, and support of the work being done by the American Red Cross was transferred to the American Committe for relief in the Near East. This made all of us regular members of the organization personnel. So while we were disappointed in not being able to organize a distinctly Mennonite Unit under the direct supervision of our Relief Commission, all but one became members of this larger Syria Unit whose headquarters was Beirut. James H. Nicol, a missionary in Syria of ten years, who had organized and conducted the work of the Red Cross in Beirut, was continued as director of the work done by the American Committee for Relief in this same field. He most sympathetically and understandingly entered into the purposes and ideals that had brought us to the field. His attitude tended to make the work agreeable to our men. Each of them considered him a personal friend.

The Syria field was divided into the Beirut and the Aleppo areas, and each of these areas into seven districts. In each one of these districts a small American Relief Unit was organized. In most of them the work was divided into four departments as follows: Orphanage, industrial, medical, and general relief. At the head of each department was placed an American worker with a staff of native assistants. In charge of the whole Unit was a local director, assisted in his work by a unit treasurer and a manager of transportation and supplies. Different units may have varied slightly in organization. Special needs may have required still other departments,

but usually the unit was made up of from six to eight American workers. This group lived together as one family and were given a great deal of freedom in working out local policies and in determining how their monthly budget should be spent. They were dependent on the headquarters office at Beirut for their funds, their supplies, their new personnel, and the decision on the larger general policies of giving relief. In Beirut were the treasurer's and executive offices for the field, and large warehouses filled with supplies.

All kinds and types of workers were needed in an organization of this kind. Our men were peculiarly fitted for certain phases of this work. Gradually they were distributed over the entire field. Ernest Miller and Jesse Smucker were both assigned to Mardin, and worked there for some months. Bro. Smucker opened and conducted the boys' orphanage until he was sent with two other workers to organize work at Diabeker. He finished his term as treasurer of that unit, charge of the supplies, and carried on relief work in a few of the most needy villages about the city. Bro. Miller began his term at Mardin as manager of transport and supplies. After Bro. Smucker left he also took charge of the boys' orphanage, and during the last six months of his term was the director of the Mardin unit. Paul Snyder served a short time as mechanic in the auto repair shop at Aleppo, but was stationed for the balance of the year at Marash, where he had charge of transport and supplies. He was one of the few American workers who remained at his post during the siege of that city, and was a personal witness to the horrors of the Marash massacre which occurred

in February, 1920. Chris Graber was stationed in Beirut until the latter part of May, working principally in the transport department. He was then transferred to Aleppo and for a short time had charge of the supplies for that area, and then was placed at the head of the Armenian refugee work in that city. There were at times as many as eight thousand Armenians in the army barracks in which the committee sheltered them. In these barracks was a fully equipped hundred and fifty bed hospital, workshops providing employment for the women, an orphanage, and soup kitchens furnishing a daily serving of food to all. The men were grouped in squads and given work on the roads. The strain of looking after this work coupled with Aleppo's unhealthy climate affected Bro. Graber's health. After a month in the hospital he was allowed to return to Beirut, and after a few weeks further rest there he was sent to open work in the Antioch district. He was in charge of this unit during the remainder of his term. Ezra Deter was stationed in Beirut, and spent the first half of his term in hauling supplies to the various out-stations with one of the big G. M. C. trucks. He was later assigned to Aleppo and succeeded Chris Graber there as manager of supplies. He completed his term there. After a few months service in the Beirut transport department both Wm. Stoltzfus and Silas Hertzler were assigned to the Sidon district. Bro. Stoltzfus became the director of the work in this district, and Bro. Hertzler had charge of three hundred boys in the orphanage. Until July, 1920, Frank Stoltzfus assisted in hauling supplies from Beirut to the outstations, and then was assigned special work at Jerusalem. Here was a well

equipped orphanage of five hundred children. He was assistant director of the institution, and had charge of the educational work in the orphanage. David Zimmerman was given charge of the motor transport and repair department at Beirut very soon after his arrival on the field. He continued in this capacity during his whole term of service with the American Committee. His special qualifications as a mechanic made him very useful for special work at the various out-stations. He and the writer were the only two of the group who remained at Beirut throughout the year. Until May 1 I assisted in the supply department, and from that time was its director. On August 1 I was given additional duties as director of the Beirut district, and a month later became the assistant director of the Syria field.

Leon Myers left the second unit of Mennonite workers at Constantinople and gave his first year of service in Asia Minor in the Marsovan area. He had charge of a number of motor trucks, which were kept busy carrying supplies from the coast towns to the far interior stations. During his second year on the field he was stationed at Constantinople and operated the Near East relief bakery. The capacity of this plant was eighteen thousand loaves of bread per day.

In July, 1919, A. M. Eash of Chicago, Ill., and John Warye of West Liberty, Ohio, arrived on the field. Bro. Eash was at once appointed director of the Syrian Orphanage at Jerusalem, where he remained for a period of two years. Brō. Warye was assigned to the Caesarea area in Asia Minor. He organized and conducted industrial work among the orphan boys.

In December, 1919, Chris Augsburger of West Liberty, Ohio, Ernest H. Miller of Fentress, Virginia, and Eli Stoltzfus of Lima, Ohio, reached Constantinople and were all three assigned work in the Syrian field. The administration in Beirut called for another group of Mennonite workers early in 1920. On April 8 of that year this group reached Beirut. Roy Kaufman of West Liberty, Ohio, Ray Bender of Springs, Pennsylvania, Martin Weaver of Newton, Kansas, Milo Zimmerman of Harper, Kansas, Roy Myers of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Daniel Stoltzfus of Martinsburg, Pennsylvania, Fred Swartzendruber of Wayland, Iowa, and Menno Nussbaum of Orrville, Ohio, were in this last group. These men took in large measure the places vacated by the first group of eleven whose term of one year had expired. In all twenty-five men have been recommended and sent out by our Relief Commission, for work in this field. Twenty-three of the total number have given their service in the Syria field.

In Syria the common language is Arabic. Outside of the coast cities, where the population is mixed, the race is also Arabic. Missionary work has been done among these people for over a hundred years. The Presbyterian mission has organized native churches in all of the larger cities and towns, and in many of them has schools of various grades and kinds. The American University of Beirut furnishes a course of training which compares well with the best colleges of our own country. Some of the American missionaries, and of the College teachers, as well as large numbers of the native Christians and students became a part of the Relief organization. The work would have been impossible

without their help. This in turn has given our own workers a close and intimate association and contact with the missionary movements and problems in that part of the foreign field. Such an opportunity for studying foreign missions in a first hand way has probably not come to any group of our people before. In the minds of the native people our men were classed with the missionaries. These conditions presented numerous opportunities of witnessing for Christ and His teachings. Among the missionaries and the other relief workers our men were always designated as the Mennonite group. This gave many real opportunities for an explanation of our attitude towards war as well as of other special points for which we stand. The year's experience has tested in a practical way the reality of these beliefs for every man.

The first of the regular workers returned in April, 1920. The terms of service were for one year. Every worker who has returned, remained on the field longer than his agreement required. The Near East Relief organization has in many ways shown its appreciation for the particular service rendered by our workers, as well as for the generous support given the work by our people. Our men seem to have filled a needed place in the Relief program, and a lasting work has been accomplished.

Russian Relief

Early in 1919, sentiment developed urging the Mennonite Relief Commission to investigate needs and conditions in South Russia, and to consider extending relief operations into that country. Russia's suffering from the result of the World War, and her

economic collapse following the revolutions were common knowledge by this time. The fact that Civil War continued to rage for two more years in various sections of South Russia, where large colonies of Mennonites lived, drew the attention of the Mennonite Church in America to this particular country. The Relief Commission took the first official action in August, 1919. A committee of three of the workers in France were appointed to proceed to South Russia, investigate conditions, and submit a report of their findings. The brethren Alvin J. Miller, Roy Allgyer, and A. E. Hiebert composed this committee. They visited Oressa, Sebastopol, and sections about these two cities, and reported the existence of an alarming and terrible need. They recommended the immediate shipment of a quantity of clothing and medical supplies and the sending of a Unit of workers. The Commission proceeded at once in line with these recommendations. Several definite proposals from other organizations for cooperative efforts were considered, but nothing definite was undertaken for some months.

In June, 1920, a delegation from the Mennonites of South Russia came to the United States. They were appointed and sent to solicit help for the Mennonites of their country, and to find a new location to which their people might emigrate. These four men came into touch with the various branches of the Church, but spent most of their time in the middle west, where previous groups of Russian Mennonite immigrants had settled. As a result of their visit, the interest in their particular field grew in every branch of the Mennonite Church in this country.

About this same time, several of the returned relief workers from Syria suggested sending a small unit as far as Constantinople. Such a unit actually so near the field, having on hand supplies and funds, might be in better position to make arrangements for entering South Russia than would be possible from this country. The Near East Relief offered to assist such a project in whatever ways they could, and further suggested that, should the way into Russia be closed, relief work be organized for the Russian refugees in and about Constantinople. The Relief Commission considered these suggestions favorably.

The next important development, was the organization of the Mennonite Central Committee, under whose direction work was finally begun, and is still being conducted. In July, 1920, at Elkhart, Indiana, representatives from the various Mennonite bodies came together, and as a result of action taken at that meeting, the Central Committee was formed. It consists of six members, one being appointed by each of the Relief Committees co-operating in South Russian Relief. Its function is to co-ordinate the efforts of these different committees. This committee appoints and sends workers, determines the monthly budget, and makes the final decision on general relief policies.

During August, a church-wide effort was made to gather a quantity of new and used clothing for distribution on the field. In most of the local congregations and in at least one conference district, this campaign was conducted by the Sisters' Sewing Circles. More than forty thousand garments were given, besides quantities of bedding, cloth and mend-

ing material. In September a shipment of twenty-five tons was sent to Constantinople. A unit consisting of Arthur Slagel of Flanagan, Illinois, Clayton Kratz of Blooming Glen, Pennsylvania, and Oric O. Miller of Akron, Pennsylvania, was appointed. Authority was given to open the work on a minimum budget of ten thousand dollars per month. On September first, by the steamer Providence, we sailed from New York for Naples, Italy. After a stay in Italy of eight days, we secured passage on another steamer, and landed at Constantinople on Sept. 27.

All of us were strangers in this city. After securing temporary hotel accommodations, we proceeded to get in touch with government officials who would help us in continuing the journey across the Black Sea. Since we represented an independent Mennonite Relief Unit, considerable explanation was necessary as to our motives, plans, and purposes, so that our mission could be properly understood. In every case there was a sympathetic and helpful interest in our efforts. The Near East Relief in Constantinople expressed the same willingness to be of assistance as had their New York office earlier. The U. S. Government officials at the embassy gave us the same recognition, and granted the same facilities and privileges that they did to any other American Relief organization. The American Red Cross, who already had an organization in the Crimea, were pleased to have us help in the relief of that needy section. The later attitude of these various organizations was entirely in accord with the attitudes they took in the beginning. Without their assistance the work would hardly have been possible. The help and advice given by others of both American

and Russian nationality was most valuable to us. They were men whose experience had put them in vital touch with conditions existing in Russia.

After arranging for Brother Slagel to remain in Constantinople, where he could continue to represent our interests, Brother Kratz and I sailed on October 2, by American destroyer for Sebastopol, Crimea. This port was reached five days later. At that time the Crimea, and a goodly portion of South Russia just north of the Crimea, was under the control of the anti-Bolshevist leader, Baron Wrangel. The first few days there were spent in getting in touch with American and Russian officials who could grant us permit and facilities for travel in the interior of the country, and also to acquaint them with the work we had in mind to do, so that the same could later be organized and carried on unhindered. We learned also of the actual work being done by the American Red Cross, and worked out with their officials a scheme whereby what we had in mind, would supplement and not overlap what they were doing. Several Mennonite families lived in this city as refugees. We lived with one of these during our stay. They gave us information concerning the needs among their people farther north, and in part prepared us for conditions as we saw them a little later.

On October 6 we left Sebastopol for a two week's journey into the interior. Twenty-four hours by train brought us to our first stop, Melitopol. Here we spent our first Sunday on Russian soil, and during the day attended the Mennonite services there. On the following day the journey was continued by carriage to Halbstadt, which is the most

important town in the largest colony of Mennonites in Russia. During the next few days we could see and get first hand information of the need existing there. This section of Russia had been overrun repeatedly by the fighting armies as well as by roving bands of robbers. The people had been repeatedly robbed of practically all their movable possessions. Some of their leading men had been cruelly murdered and the women defamed and diseased. Typhus had been brought into these Mennonite communities by the soldiers, and large numbers had died from the disease. The people had become poor, miserable, and their outlook hopeless. We met with their relief organizations, and together worked out plans for the distribution of the funds and supplies among them which had been sent us from America, and which were then waiting at Constantinople. Plans were made for the opening of orphanages, helping the hospitals, the distribution of clothing and in giving other relief of a general nature. We then journeyed on to Alexandrovsk, which was the center of another large Mennonite community, saw even a greater need there, and worked out similar plans for helping them. Brother Kratz then returned to Halbstadt, where he began the organization of the work in preparation for the coming of the supplies, while I returned to Sebastopol, and after a few days procured passage back to Constantinople.

Brother Slagel and I gathered our supplies and he had just left Constantinople in charge of this shipment when the news of Wrangel's defeat reached us. It was then that I made another short trip to Sebastopol, but was there only long enough to leave a few written suggestions for the further conduct of the

work. These were left with the Mennonite families, and were to be given to Brother Kratz, as soon as communication would again be established between them and Halbstadt. I also succeeded in bringing along back to Constantinople about two-thirds of the supplies belonging to the Unit. After the return from this trip, the prospects for work such as we had planned were poor indeed.

With Baron Wrangel's defeat and flight from Russia there came to Constantinople about 130,000 Russian refugees. Over eighty per cent of these were soldiers or officers of his army. The remainder were either families of these soldiers or those who lives would be in danger under Soviet government because of their past anti-Bolshevik actions. Of this number there were nearly two hundred Mennonites. One hundred five ships brought this army of refugees across the Black Sea. Many of them had to stay on these ships for over two weeks. The situation soon became appalling. Here was our opportunity. In various ways the Unit was soon aiding in their relief. Efforts were made to get these people back again into normal self-supporting life, either by finding them work in that vicinity or arranging for their emigration to countries where friends could assist them. An orphanage was opened in which homeless and under-nourished Russian refugee children could be temporarily cared for, until parents could again assume such responsibility. Later, after Brother Slagel succeeded in bringing the supplies back to Constantinople, a department was organized for distributing the new and used clothing that had been sent from America. In these and various other ways efforts were made towards an efficient distribu-

tion of the funds and supplies that had been put at our disposal.

Early in December Frank Stoltzfus of Lima, Ohio, and Joseph Brunk of Denbigh, Virginia, came from America to assist in this work. On March 29, 1921, Vesta Zook of Topeka, Indiana, and Vinora Weaver of Goshen, Indiana, sailed from New York to join the Unit. Before leaving Constantinople on my return to America, policies were drawn up and adopted by the Unit for the further conduct of the work in that city, and for its extension again into South Russia. There the need exists in a larger way, affecting the whole population, and there relief can be given which might do a more permanent good. That is the section for which the work was undertaken in the first place.

As a distinctly Mennonite Relief Unit, this has been a new extension or department in the work of our Church. In a missionary way opportunities have come to our workers, such as has not been possible in any relief work which the Church has supported hitherto. The workers are taking advantage of these opportunities to the extent of their ability and time. But it will be the duty of later writers to note the lasting effects of a distinctly Mennonite relief work on the general missionary extension program of the Church.

CHAPTER XV

LESSONS TAUGHT BY THE WAR

The Teacher

Teaching implies that there is a teacher and one or more pupils; that the majority of those taught, whether they like the teacher or not, will try to work out the lessons while the teacher simply guides the minds of the pupils. The latter form their own conclusions. It need not imply that the lessons taught are pleasant, nor that the pupil will want to live in the elements embodied in the lessons. Some lessons are very practical and are intended for immediate use; others simply teach how to avoid certain results, and keep from things which lead to sad experiences. The war was a hard and cruel teacher, but it is to be hoped that some of its lessons have been well learned, even by the world, but especially by Christians.

War Has Taught Conservation

War has taught lessons on conservation along many lines. We can live on bread that is made from a combination of grains; it need not be pure, spring wheat. A person can get along with two pounds of sugar per month. We got along without using the automobile on Sunday. It is both convenient and economical to "Use the back of the letter for the carbon copy of the answer." Man can work hard

and get along with very little meat. The list might be greatly lengthened. The purpose of all this was not that we might be able to add to our bank account (In some cases these economics cost more than the thing saved) but that some one else might have what we did not actually need. Save, conserve, economize, were words that went from ocean to ocean and from the Frigid Zone to the Gulf. No one meant that these bodies should not have all that was needed, but that everything should be used sparingly and to the best possible advantage and to be selected with the good of the whole people in mind.

Some bowed to those teachings at once and got many benefits from these laws and proclamations—things which will be helpful in times of peace as well as in war. They sought cheaper foods, studied the comparative nutrient values, weighed these with the costs, and made purchases accordingly. Farmers studied their crops in connection with the labor problem as never before. How to accomplish the most with the least outlay, and yet comply with the wishes of Government in increasing the production was a trying question, but farmers in general went at it with a determination to make the best of the situation. The classes which tried to meet the problem of sacrifice in this way were greatly benefited, and after the war they were in a position to adjust themselves in the reconstruction which must always follow in the path of the war. But the class which rebelled and refused to conserve except when driven to it, closed their eyes to the demands of Government. The war is over. They were compelled to yield in many things, but they learned no lesson of

profit because they gave no room for the spirit of sacrifice and co-operation.

Conserving for the Kingdom of God

The Church learned all of the above and more. She learned that she is better off by using greater economy even in some of the necessaries of life. She learned how to make more money and give more for the Lord's cause. Never before had she given so largely; she would not have considered it possible. More than all, she learned that it was possible to get along when a large per cent of her young men were taken away from her, and that for a cause which she could not endorse. The fact that she has been largely rural has helped her to conserve her man-power to the Church. Let her keep all these things in mind and conserve them for the kingdom of God; the young men and women, the accumulating wealth, the thought power that had been devoted to the war; let all of these be as freely used for the ingathering of the lost as they were to fill the army camps and disciplinary barracks, but let it be done willingly and not grudgingly. Conserve, not to add acre to acre or bond to bond, but soul to soul; to add to freedom that which is freedom indeed.

Worldly Insecurity

Another lesson which the war should have taught every one is that of worldly insecurity. People were depending largely on the freedom and independence of the country, prosperity was enjoyed by humanity at large, peace societies were organized and were growing strong, and people thought that a great war was an impossibility; but the war has taught us the truth that so long as we are in this

world we may expect difficulties between nations and that so long as people have false notions as to what constitutes national honor, so long wars will not be unknown.

The Influenza

As the war was across the sea the people who remained in this country considered themselves reasonably safe. Many prayers went up in behalf of those who crossed the briny deep, but little thought was given as to the dangers at home; but when the influenza came (the war was responsible for this also) and swept more people into their graves than the war did, some realized more and more that life was very insecure.

Mine, yet not Mine

Before the war it was a common thought that if one had money, that he was at liberty to use it as he pleased so long as he did not violate the laws of the land. Independence was prominent. "This is mine," was a common expression and usually meant that no one had any right to dictate in regard to the use that was made of it, and if someone was presumptuous enough to try to do so, no attention would be given to the demands. When liberty bond or Red Cross drives were on, regardless of one's conscientious scruples against abetting war, others came and said, "You will donate so much to the Red Cross," or, "You will buy so many bonds." To refuse, in many cases, meant persecution. In some cases cattle were driven away, homes ransacked, houses daubed with paint inside and out, bodies covered with tar and feathers or otherwise tortured, and all done in the name of "loyalty." But it was a kind of

loyalty which received no sanction from the war department nor from any right-thinking people. At the same time it showed how insecure was all that was earthly. The sad part about it is that it took the horrors of war to teach such a meager lesson—one that all should have realized and acted upon without a war, either small or great.

The Folly of Militarism

That armies and navies are absolutely no adequate preparation for defense had been shown many times but was probably never so manifest as in the late war. Germany had a mighty army, well trained in military tactics, had the best equipped munitions plants in the world, had all the latest inventions for causing destruction and death that could be found; but at the end of four years of warfare she found herself defeated, humiliated, with dictated peace terms, under conditions that a refusal to accept would have meant more of the same kind of humiliation and harder peace terms. She is a hated, bankrupt nation, and her children yet unborn will not live long enough to see the nation fully recovered from the effects of the war.

That military training has proven a blessing to a comparatively small percentage of young men can not be denied, neither can it be denied that a much larger per cent have been injured very much morally and spiritually by the society of the army camp. Militarism has a few points in its favor, but it has charges enough against it, has proven a curse to humanity at large, has ruined lives enough for time and eternity to cast it into oblivion, never more to be resurrected.

True Preparedness

True preparedness is not in armies, does not lie in a large body of men well trained in military tactics and fully equipped navies, but in trust and obedience to the living God. If the United States had been right with Him, Germany could never have touched us to our hurt. The same is true of the other countries engaged against her. Notice Israel; the Lord fought her battles so long as she truly served Him. At such times there were no records of thousands of fatalities as there were in the late war. It was when she forsook Him that her conflicts came. It was then that her fatalities were high. True preparedness is in Jesus Christ, and in Him only.

God's Overruling for Good

Manufacturers of war materials and money kings were more interested in filling their pockets than in obeying the living God. Men thought more of the honor of their country than they did of following the lowly Nazarene and waiting to see the salvation which the Lord would bring. With this condition in this country and war in Europe, it is not at all surprising that the United States was drawn into the conflict also. If she must fight she certainly must conscript, for people had learned too well that there is a better way to settle disputes than with instruments of death and destruction. They would not go in sufficient numbers by simply voluntary enlistment. Conscription dare not be by class based on religion, hence the conscientious objector must go also. Our brethren went but they could not fight. They were made to suffer, but in

the majority of cases their trials proved to be blessings in disguise. They had time to study and they wanted to know what the Scriptures taught in reference to the question at hand, and when brought before the officers they were ready to give an answer for the hope that was within them. Officers in many cases tried to bring Scriptures to justify war, only to be surprised to see how quickly these young men, much younger and supposed to be ignorant, could take every argument away from them. W. G. Kellogg, chairman of the Board of Inquiry, speaking of the conscientious objectors said, "These men knew their Bible.....They knew it narrowly, unintelligently, but they knew it." The same author speaking of the Mennonite C. O., says, "His Bible, well-thumbed, is surely somewhere in his deep pockets, and he can turn readily to almost any chapter that may be in question." While this was given with a tinge of ridicule, it must be admitted to be good testimony in this that it recognizes that Mennonite young men know their Bibles.

Two Lessons in these Incidents

First, while it is true that many of our brethren "knew their Bibles" on the points in question after they had been in camp for some time, it is also true that some of them would have fared better from the beginning if they had been more familiar with what the Bible taught before they went to camp. A good Bible knowledge is a valuable asset at all times. One of the most formidable obstacles in "getting the C. O. across" was a "Thus saith the Lord," on the tongue of the objector.

Second, while the Bible is the greatest defense

that any one could have at such a time, it should be remembered that this same Bible teaches that, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." It costs something to live the Christ life. When the trials came, not all stood the test. Of the estimated three thousand nine hundred C. O.'s, one hundred twenty-two were assigned to general military service by the Board of Inquiry, three hundred ninety to noncombatant service, fifteen hundred eighty-eight were judged sincere and were recommended for farm furlough or Friends reconstruction work. One table is given showing that of one thousand sixty C. O.'s examined in twelve different camps, five hundred fifty-four were Mennonites. It would be interesting to know how many of these came from each branch of the Church. While some branches have reported their number, others have not made very great efforts to gather this information. The main branch, simply termed "Mennonites," has reported two hundred fifty-two who on conscientious grounds, refused to accept service; the Old Order Amish report one hundred twenty-eight, and the Hutterites, forty-nine.

Need of More Christian Work

Those who are interested in the moral and spiritual uplift of humanity and at the same time have studied the effects of the war upon the thought-life as it is manifested in words and actions of mankind today have ample food for thought. Notwithstanding that claims have been made that we are on the verge of a great revival in religion, it is an acknowledged fact that profanity increased very rapidly in the camps and the soldier having returned to his

home has not left his camp conversation behind him. There is a greater disregard for God and the deeper things of the Christian life than there was before the war. The Church has more to do at her own door than she had before the war, and if she fails to gather in more of this outside element and raise it to the standard of a life in Christ, she must herself expect spiritual and numerical loss. According to good authority one of the largest Protestant denominations lost more than sixty-nine thousand members in 1919 in the United States. The war has taught many lessons and none more forcibly than the fact that it has a very damaging effect on the morals of mankind and that Paul stated a very significant fact in Galatians 6:7—"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The world is reaping, but if the Church does not put forth her earnest efforts to stem the tide her own existence will be in danger. She, too, will reap! "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Prophesies and Prophesies

When the war assumed such large proportions there were a great many predictions as to the final results. Many thought that this was the consummation of all things; that the great battle of Armageddon would be fought in the western part of Palestine, and when the British entered that country from Egypt, even a few Mennonites were taken up with that idea, and saw in Revelation 16:16, just before the pouring out of the seventh vial of the wrath of God, the last great battle between good and evil. Scriptures were quoted showing that the United States would get into the conflict, and in the end

would be sadly defeated; that she would become tributary to some other nation, not Germany. There were prophecies modern and prophesies ancient. The ancient ones were often twisted to fit the modern ones. The cause is easy to determine. Some one got an idea, then went to the Bible to get something to prove his point. People who follow this method of Bible study are not very apt to arrive at the truth. Study it, leaving out all preconceived ideas; study to get the truth it intends to convey, not what you want it to convey. Most of the prophecies made in reference to the war, and especially those which were considered as based on some Scripture passage, failed to come to pass, not because the Scriptures were not true, but because some one wanted to make them say something which they did not say. Study and discuss those things which are necessary to salvation and the spiritual welfare of mankind instead of speculating on Scripture passages. It is more profitable.

Value of Right Living

With conditions as enumerated, one can readily understand that normal thinking was hardly to be expected. Hence at such times, above all others, right living is highly essential. Regular food, not too great a variety, very plain, not excessive in amount but enough, seemed to agree with the young men in camp, and the majority of them were comparatively healthy. The "conserving" campaign in the homes proved a blessing rather than a curse. These are lessons which should be retained. But the influence of right living in a higher and nobler sense was then, and is now, of still greater value.

When thought in general was along lines of hatred, murder, and destruction; when the newspapers were full of everything that was bad about the enemy; and when deeds were represented as good or bad according to who did them rather than on the merits or demerits of the act, it was indeed needful that the Christ-life should shine out very clearly. Thus every act would not only point to a better life but would also be a rebuke to sin which seemed to reign unchecked. Right living is always needful, but never more so than when, as then, Satan seemed to be taking everything by storm. The darker the night, the brighter the light shines and the more it is appreciated by the lost and weary traveler. May the lessons on right living, as taught by the war, not soon be forgotten.

CHAPTER XVI

PROBLEMS FOR THE CHURCH

Military Training in the Schools

There are a number of problems which have grown out of the war confronting our Church. Others existed earlier, but the great upheaval brought them more forcibly to the brotherhood and they are demanding a solution. Not the least of these is the question of military training in the schools. Some high schools, colleges, and universities have that in their courses of study, and to refuse to take the training means to be expelled from school. In many states the child is obliged to attend school until it is fourteen years of age, and some are in high school before that age. To obey their convictions and the teachings of the Church drives them away from the place which they were obliged to attend under a heavy penalty. This needs a solution.

Universal Military Training

There are a number of bills before Congress providing for universal military training. These bills differ somewhat in their wording, but roughly speaking, they all finally aim at a two-year course of training somewhere between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six, and as stated in one of the bills, "All persons trained under this act shall automatically become members of the national reserve.....

upon the completion of their training." In other words, if any one of these bills became a law, without exception aside from physical and mental unfitness, every young man in the land must take at least six months of training (the least time required by any of the bills now pending), and once trained, he "automatically" becomes a soldier subject to call at any time; his only escape being the passing of his forty-sixth birthday. A number of petitions have come to some of the congressmen opposing the passing of such a bill, one signed by more than twenty thousand members of the Mennonite Church asks for exemption for nonresistants in case such a law is passed.

The final result regarding such a law is not yet known. The young men of this country need to be saved from such a situation if that is possible, and if not possible then our young brethren need to know exactly what the position of the Church is on the question of military training, that as a body she is ready to suffer with them if that is necessary. Military training and nonresistance are diametrically opposed to each other. Only one of these can live and thrive in the minds of the young people. As to which it shall be depends on the training and practice of the present time in the home, in the school, and in the Church. Will the Church rise to her powers and responsibilities in Christ Jesus? Her interest in this question is shown in the quick responses to the petition, and in the earnest prayers for protection and divine overruling.

Indoctrination

The Church needs to be ably, carefully, prayer-

fully taught. Theories as well as subjects that are not Biblical, should be banished from the pulpit. The place is too sacred and the time too short to present anything which is not deeply rooted in God's Word. Truth needs to be thoroughly expounded so that the hearer may grasp it. The preacher should have no hobbies. The people want to hear all that is necessary to salvation. If the Church is properly taught there is not nearly so much danger of her getting away from the truth.

There is a great weakness in the work of indoctrination in many pulpits at this time. Even Mennonite ministers are not clear enough on the issues which are popular. Desperate efforts are being made at confederation, union, and the building up of a religion minus self-denial except as it is found in serving others, taking away sin without the blood of Christ, leaving the cross out of life, and leaving the unpopular out of Christianity. Let the ministry be thoroughly posted on what the Word of God teaches, let them listen quietly for the directions of the Spirit, and let them study plans of impressing the truth in the most convincing ways. Let the teaching be done with all the tenderness of a father, and yet with the thunderings of Sinai, and, under God, results are sure to follow.

Trench Salvation

The trench salvation which was held up both in pulpit and camp has had a very damaging effect. Many ministers held that when one gave his life for his country he had a pretty sure passport to heaven. One minister in preaching to a large audience said, "The man who goes into this war and sheds his

blood to save his country, to protect your home and mine, to preserve this United States as a land of the free, is as much a savior of men as Jesus Christ was. God and the angels would welcome such a man at the pearly gates of immortal glory." Is it surprising that some of the denominations which were most enthusiastic in encouraging men to go to war have lost most heavily in membership in the last few years? H. K. Carroll, compiler of the first official census of religions in the United States, claims that one of the leading Protestant denominations, in 1919, had a decrease of more than sixty-nine thousand; another, more than thirty-five thousand; and another, more than thirty-two thousand. To overcome this, partially a result of religious attitude of pulpit orations during the war, is a task. The Church needs to stand "four square" on the teachings of Eternal Truth. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Dying for country, for home, for wife and children, may be a seeming need, but it brings salvation to no man. The closer a church remained to the Gospel during the war, the more she is in a position now to win men back to the truth.

Consistent Separation

The Bible teaches a separation from the world. "Ye are not of the world." This position was taken by our brethren in camp, and as a rule was met with some consideration from the officers; but they expected words and actions to correspond with the profession. When a C. O. smoked, chewed tobacco, swore, used vulgar language, or did a number of

other things not consistent with his profession, his chances to get into the regular service in the army increased very materially.

It has been suggested that should there be another war, there be more attention given by officials to the attitude on separation from the world. Those whose appearance and actions showed actual separation would likely be excused from service while those who simply professed and did not show it would not be granted the rights that a C. O. had in this war. On the other hand, if the ministry does not teach a consistent separation from the world, two things are also very evident: first, that the young men are not likely to be separate; second, that it would be much harder for their brethren to get such freedom even if they were separate themselves.

But the ministry is not alone responsible for this teaching. The Sunday school teacher is as responsible as the minister, and possibly more so because he comes into such close touch with the pupil, and in his "follow-up work" does not have so many to look after. Possibly a still greater responsibility comes to the home. If the child is trained for the world from infancy, it will be very hard to train it for Jesus Christ when it is grown up. Then, too, separation is not only a Bible doctrine in theory. The Lord would never have incorporated it in His Book if He did not expect it to be practiced. Here is a responsibility for every member of the Church.

Abnormal Conditions

War itself is abnormal and tends to make everything else so. Much more food will be needed than

in times of peace because it must be expected that much will be destroyed by the enemy, some go to the bottom of the sea or otherwsie be lost in transit or by improper storage. All due allowance must be made for waste in the process of preparation because of inexperienced cooks. The number of food producers and factory workers will be materially decreased because these producers have gone to war and will be consumers and not producers. Money will be inflated and large investments will be made in wild schemes to get rich quick. All these things tend to increase prices of food-stuffs and manufactured articles. It costs more to live and the price of labor rises rapidly, which only tends to raise the prices of the necessities of life still more, and labor asks for another raise; and so it goes.

When the war closes there must be a period of re-adjustment and here is where the trial comes. Labor has had higher wages and shorter hours. There is a general demand for a reduction of prices on food-stuffs to pre-war levels. Self-interest says, "It cost me so much; I can not sell it at a sacrifice." Labor aids in the cry against high prices but says, "There must be no change in price of labor or in the length of hours." At once unrest and even riots are started. Strikes become the order of the day, and there is a general unrest. Creation of public sentiment, legislation, and what not are tried but without the desired results. Everything is tried except the right thing. Let humanity try the Gospel plan of looking toward the welfare of others as well as to its own and see how quickly these things change.

The problem of unrest is not so much a problem

for the Church as a body as for the individuals composing that body. This spirit of unrest is destructive to the best interests of the home, the community, and the nation. It requires the spirit of Jesus Christ to help us to be patient, to show that we live above these things and for a better purpose. The darkness of the world is great, but the darker the night the more effective the light. Now, as very few times in the history of the nation, it is extremely necessary for every Christian to show a spirit of calmness, cheerfulness (with sobriety) and confidence, all of which are clearly rooted in Jesus Christ —such a spirit as only the Christian can show. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Evangelizing America

The year 1919 shows the smallest gains in church membership (all churches) since 1907 and possibly for many years before that. Think of it, only about four and one-fifth per cent. of the gains of 1917. The showing for the Mennonite Church is much better than that, some of the conferences having gains in 1919 equal to or greater than those of 1917, but that larger increase in membership means larger responsibilities in evangelizing America. By this we do not mean that every one must be gathered into the fold of Christ, but the bringing of the Gospel to America so that every one may know something about Christ, and be intelligently enough informed on the question of salvation that he could find Christ if he so desired. This is necessary for our own maintenance. If we will not work systematically and persistently to this end for any other

reason, we should be awakened to the need from that standpoint; but above all we should remember that the Great Commission, in the words of Jesus Christ, commands it. We absolutely ought not to rest until all "from the least unto the greatest" shall have the opportunity to personally know our Savior, first, because He has commanded it and, second, that we be not swallowed up by the world.

Our Place in the Mission Field

If the Mennonite Church does not bring something essential to the world which other churches are leaving out, especially in the next two decades; if she will not reach out and fill some place with the Gospel which other churches will not fill; if she will not supply workers where other churches fail to supply, she will be missing the opportunities of a century. God has favored her as He has very few others in the last five years. We can show our appreciation in no better way than to carry the Gospel to His creation in other parts of the world. We have the young people to send and we have the money to send them. The fact that we hold our membership in that religious organization says to the world that we believe that she has the right doctrine, that salvation through Christ comes to those who accept that teaching, and that those who do not have Jesus Christ are lost. Believing all this, the Mennonite Church should re-double her efforts and work unceasingly with the aim of establishing Christian work in every foreign mission field in the world, and establishing churches by the score west of the Mississippi River, where there are areas of a thousand square miles, and even cities of considerable size

with no established Protestant Christian Church of any kind. Is it not selfish and un-Christlike to be willing to enjoy the benefits of a religion without making an earnest effort to have others to enjoy the same benefit? It is a real problem for us to educate our people to the need and so lay the matter upon their hearts that they will do much more for the spreading of the Gospel than has been done to this time.

The Money Side

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." "The cattle on a thousand hills are mine." "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." "All the earth is mine." This shows very clearly that all our possessions—whether moneys, bonds, or lands—all are the Lord's. Man's position is simply that of a steward. He is responsible for the way he uses it. When he uses it for himself, or puts it into the bank, or invests it in land when the Lord needs it and man will not give it, it is as much a sin as if he has another man's possessions and will not return them. It is a problem how to get this before the people in a way that they will receive it and do their duty.

The Other Side

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Christ gave all that He had, finally life itself, that the world might know. He gave all that He had received. Dearly beloved! we are not doing that. He wants us to do it. Money is needed, but that is not all.

We need to give (go) ourselves. That is the way Christ did.

We should freely give our sons and daughters. We should encourage the young people of the Church to willingly give themselves. Instead of this many of the churches refuse to ordain young men so long as they are not needed for the work at home. How very different this is from the mind of Christ.

The Mennonites have a very large percentage of their young people gathered into the Church, and many of them are active—but could and would do much more if they were urged more. Nothing has a more wholesome effect than to have a work for every member and every member doing that work. If the Church wants a deeper work of grace in the home congregation, if she wants less of selfishness—in short, if she wants Christ fully established she must have a greater interest in the salvation of the lost world. If your son or daughter wants to go to other lands to carry the Gospel to the lost, are you ready to lend encouragement from the first?

"The Field is the World"

That is what the Savior said, and if it was "white to harvest" then, what is the condition now? Since then it has enlarged and is over-ripe. The War has made about as much difference in the world from a missionary point of view as it has politically. The Moslem's confidence is shaken. Mecca, his sacred city; the cave of Machpelah, the tomb of Abraham; the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem—all places which are greatly reverred—are in the hands of their enemies. Has the Allah of the Moslem forsaken His people? Either that, or the "Christian

infidel" has been favored of God for some other purpose. Can the Moslem continue in this way? The Hindus, regardless of caste, have elbowed their way through the war, side by side, on an equal basis. Such a thing could never have occurred in India. Can their old system stand such a shock? The Czar of Russia was the head of the Greek Church, and many were the missionaries and native preachers who were compelled to quit preaching, or leave the country, or be banished to Siberia. The Czar is gone, the Greek Catholics are more or less at sea. O, the wonderful, wonderful open doors for mission work! The bankrupt condition of Europe and the numerical losses of some of the larger denominations in the last year, while the Mennonite Church has been blessed with an increased membership, doubles our responsibilities. May she be humble and sufficiently consecrated to continue in this great work.

"Church of God, awake, arise."

Let these words be sung with the pathos of a burdened soul, ladened with responsibility, a burden which can never be satisfied with anything less than the salvation of the lost, the upbuilding of God's kingdom, and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. With the unsettled conditions in the world, how very necessary this is! May our loving Father help us to see the importance of this problem.

Why Was She Kept?

Other denominations have sprung up, have lived a while and were then swallowed up by newer ones, or have themselves grown until they number their adherents by the hundred thousands. The Menno-

mite Church has lived for four centuries, but in spite of her age she is still one of the smaller bodies. Why has she thus existed? She ranks fairly high in the amount of wealth per capita, and has that wealth quite evenly distributed. She has for the last two or three decades been gathering her young people into the Church remarkably well, and many are preparing themselves for special service. This is suggestive of two things: first, that through all these centuries God has had a purpose in sustaining her, and it was He who made it possible that the young people could be thus gathered in and the wealth so evenly distributed; second, that if the Church neglects, at this time of great need, to send her young men and women and her money to other lands in such numbers and amounts as the Lord wants and rightly expects for the spreading of sound doctrine—the doctrine of atonement through the substitutionary death of Christ upon the cross, salvation in Him and in Him only—unless she wakes up and does the will of the Lord in this she need not be surprised if God withdraws His blessings and allows those who had been favored to grope their way in darkness as best they can. That would mean decline and death in a few short years. He has wonderfully blest for a purpose. Let that purpose have our foremost thought, our best efforts, and our ardent prayers.

It is not the purpose of this book to parade the Mennonite Church, nor the boys in camp, nor those who in their homes have passed through severe trials, except in so far as may be needed to show the practical side of nonresistance, and the way that the question was met under pressure. May it be a

means of strengthening the Church in the doctrine of our Savior, of pointing out this doctrine more fully to the world, and of helping future generations to meet the issues that grow out of opposition to it in a better way than we have met them, and thereby be better able to convince others of the practicability of this much neglected subject — **NONRESISTANCE.** The degree of success or failure of this book depends on how well it accomplishes this end.

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